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DISCERNING THOUGHTS

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Foreword 5–6

The Mystery of Christian Intellectual Discernment: Learning from Ephrem the Syrian and Anastasios of Sinai 7–22

Calum Samuelson

Intellectual discernment was an essential aspect of arriving at the core beliefs of Christianity in the early Church. Calum Samuelson uses the Second Letter to Timothy to reflect on the search for the truth in Ephrem the Syrian and Anastasios of Sinai. Samuelson writes in memory of Joe Munitiz, making use of his edition of Anastasios.

The Spiritual Masters of Pope Francis: Hugo Rahner, Miguel Á. Fiorito, Gaston Fessard 23–37

Santiago Madrigal Terrazas

Joe Munitiz's last translation for *The Way* explores the theological framework of Pope Francis's Ignatian spirituality. His christological approach to discernment can be traced to the work of Hugo Rahner, Miguel Ángel Fiorito and Gaston Fessard.

From the Archive

The Spiritual Journal of St Ignatius 39–59

Joseph A. Munitiz

The first article Joe wrote for *The Way* was a penetrating exploration of the inner fabric of Ignatius' spirit. His exploration of the Spiritual Diary reads as freshly today as it did then, concluding with a surprising insight that will console anyone involved in busy ministry.

Some Thoughts about the 'Prodigal Son' with a Little Help from a Byzantine Commentary 61–66

Barbara Crostini

By paying attention to the original language of Luke's story of the Prodigal Son, Barbara Crostini—another friend writing in memory of Joe Munitiz—reveals unexpected insights into how it would have been understood by its first readers. In doing so she reveals the ever-changing complexity of salvation in human life which is unique for each one of us.

A Dissertation, a Spiritual Diary and Devotion: On Spirituality and Academic Research 67–76

Christopher Staab

This reflection on the spiritual transformation that accompanied the process of writing a doctoral thesis on the Spiritual Diary of St Ignatius reveals how scholarly research can lead to interior freedom.

Thinking Faith

The Eucharist and Care of Creation: An Ancient Perspective 77–81

John Moffatt

St Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* contains an integral understanding of the eucharist which binds it more deeply to creation. It helps us to avoid damaging narratives of creation and redemption so that we can prepare ourselves to tackle the current ecological crisis.

Contemplativus in scribendo*: Writing a Thesis as Making the Spiritual Exercises* 83–94

Antonius Sumarwan

The act of studying for a thesis can be likened to the experience of undergoing the Spiritual Exercises. Sumarwan demonstrates the similarities and differences before drawing up a programme that might help reinvigorate the writing process.

Joseph A. Munitiz SJ: Tributes, Reminiscences and Reflections 95–110

Charalambos Dendrinos, Michael Barnes, Ahilya Noone and Kathleen Taylor

Friends, colleagues and fellow Jesuits pay tribute to the late Joe Munitiz SJ, who contributed so much to *The Way* over many years.

Book Reviews

Philip Endean on a facsimile edition of the Autograph of the *Spiritual Exercises*

Paul Nicholson on integrating theology and spirituality

Roger Reader on ministry in prisons

Peter Groves on contrasting approaches to philosophy of religion

Gerald O'Collins on divine revelation

Geoffrey te Braake on praying with Isaac the Syrian

Paul Moser on the role of conscience in Catholic moral theology

FOR AUTHORS

The Way warmly invites readers to submit articles with a view to publication. They should normally be about 4,000 words long, and be in keeping with the journal's aims. The Editor is always ready to discuss possible ideas. A Special Issue is planned on spiritual conversation, so articles in this area will be particularly welcome.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Autobiography	Ignatius of Loyola, 'Reminiscences (Autobiography)', in *Personal Writings*
Constitutions	in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996)
Diary	'The Spiritual Diary', in *Personal Writings*
Dir	*On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599*, translated and edited by Martin E. Palmer (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996)
Exx	*The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, translated by George E. Ganss (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992)
GC	General Congregation, in *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 31st–35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009) and *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus* (Boston: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2017)
MHSJ	Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu, 157 volumes (Madrid and Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1898–)
Personal Writings	*Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings*, translated by Philip Endean and Joseph A. Munitiz (London: Penguin, 1996)

Papal documents may be found at www.vatican.va

FOREWORD

A DISCERNING INTELLECT was one of the principal gifts of Joe Munitiz SJ (1931–2022), whose fifty-year association with *The Way* has left an indelible mark. This issue pays tribute to him with a selection of articles exploring the processes of intellectual discernment that underpin the lives of individuals and communities. From the doctrinal debates of the early Church to the Spiritual Diary of St Ignatius, saints and scholars have always made careful decisions about which thoughts to follow and which to set aside. Such decisions are accompanied by processes of discernment that take days, months or even years to come to fruition. By paying attention to the character of these processes, we can better dispose ourselves to let our thoughts be shaped according to God's design. In doing so, even our intellectual lives can become an expression of our discipleship of Jesus.

In the lead article, Calum Samuelson, one of the many young scholars whose talent was cultivated by Joe Munitiz, draws out guidance on intellectual discernment from the Paul's First Letter to Timothy and the Letter to the Ephesians. He uses it to explore the work of two early Christian thinkers, Anastasios of Sinai and Ephrem the Syrian, proposing that 'the task of Christian intellectual discernment is less like constructing an elaborate edifice of knowledge and more like building a beautiful, spacious sanctuary in which God's mysteries can be manifested and adored'. Meanwhile, in an article first published in our sister journal *Thinking Faith*, John Moffatt uses the work of St Irenaeus to discern between those narratives of creation and redemption that damage our relationship with nature and those which sustain it. In doing so he discovers an integral vision of the eucharist that prepares us to tackle the ecological crisis.

The oft-noted reluctance of St Ignatius to admit his intellectual abilities was articulated in Joe Munitiz's first ever article for *The Way*, published fifty years ago. He writes that in the Spiritual Diary of St Ignatius, 'the amount of intellectual cogitation involved in the saint's meditation is minimal: it is rare, and worthy of note, to be struck by a new idea'. The evident originality and inventiveness which marked the early Society of Jesus emerged from a process of discernment that cultivated a deeper dependence upon God. In Joe Munitiz's final translation for us, Santiago Madrigal Terrazas explores the theological

framework that formed Pope Francis's spirituality. He concludes that Hugo Rahner, Miguel Á. Fiorito and Gaston Fessard all contributed to a basically christological understanding of discernment, drawn from the *Spiritual Exercises*, that explains Pope Francis's own discernment for the Church today.

A careful discernment is also implicit in the intellectual task of reading the scriptures. Inspired by a love of the precision of the Greek language that Joe Munitiz shared, Barbara Crostini teases out the nuances of the parable of the Prodigal Son in the Gospel of Luke. She discerns a subtle dialectic in the original text that disrupts the conventional understanding of salvation leading to the unanticipated freshness of the father's response.

This journal would not be possible without the talent and dedication of our authors. Two of them reflect upon the process of discernment that underpins the act of scholarly writing. Christopher Staab describes the spiritual transformation he underwent while writing a doctoral thesis on the abundance of devotion in the Spiritual Diary of St Ignatius. And Antonius Sumarwan reinvigorates the academic writing process by implementing a framework drawn from the structure of prayer in the Spiritual Exercises. He shows how the preparation of a thesis can be accompanied by a process of discernment that becomes an opportunity for continuous dialogue and cooperation with God.

Finally, this issue includes selected reminiscences of Joe Munitiz that give insight into the character of this kind and gentle scholar, including an account of his life by Charalambos Dendrinos, one of his close friends and academic colleagues. My own friendship with Joe began when he lived with us in the Jesuit novitiate. Once he took us for our yearly holiday in North Wales where we asked if he would cook for us. His reply was that the only thing he could cook with any confidence was Spanish tortilla. He paused and looked at us with characteristic delight in his eyes and said simply: '… it's all in how you cook the potatoes'. Many years later, after numerous failed attempts, I discovered that his well-discerned thought was entirely correct. The same clarity is can be found in the words he used to describe the discovery of his vocation as a Jesuit priest: 'More and more I knew that I would be happy only with the choice of a life dedicated to the service of Christ'.

Philip Harrison SJ
Editor

THE MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN INTELLECTUAL DISCERNMENT

Learning from Ephrem the Syrian and Anastasios of Sinai

Calum Samuelson

LITERATURE ABOUT CHRISTIAN DISCERNMENT in general has been produced prodigiously throughout church history. Leaders and church fathers have written great wisdom concerning both the pitfalls and the godly measures that Christians should consider as they make professional, personal and practical decisions in daily life. By comparison, almost nothing has been written about how Christians might navigate analogous dynamics in their intellectual endeavours.

Should Christian academics, researchers and others pursue intellectual work in different ways from those who do not share their faith? Is all knowledge equally accessible to the equipped intellect or is there room for unique Christian modes of pursuit? These questions seem especially pertinent in the information age. After all, every Christian today must anyway wrestle with the quandaries of how to absorb, analyze, and apply the over-abundance of knowledge that floods our minds.

Because intellectual topics and conversations are often associated with precise, discursive language, it could make sense to approach these questions in the same way. However, I propose that a distinct Christian perspective on intellectual discernment may involve precisely the *disruption* of such discursive reasoning. This is provided by my two titular figures in Christian history—Ephrem the Syrian (*c.*306–373) and Anastasios of Sinai (*c.*630–700).

At first glance, these thinkers may seem like a strange pairing: they come from quite different times and theological backgrounds. However, the uniqueness and peculiarity of these men disrupted the standard intellectual expectations in their day and promises to provide similar disruption even now. Stated briefly, Ephrem challenges notions of *systematic reasoning* and Anastasios challenges notions of *idealism and perfectionism*. The combined thinking of these Christian intellectuals

The Way, 62/1 (january 2023), 7–22

offers encouragement and inspiration to those pursuing intellectual vocations today.

In a superb essay in *The Way*, Nicholas Austin alludes to the snares associated with 'human reason' and explores how both logical discernment and paradoxical mystery are involved in spiritual progress.[1] Here, I am following a similar approach in exploring the *mystery* connected to what I am calling Christian intellectual discernment. Although the idea of mystery receives an awkward welcome in much of the Western world, I hope at least to demonstrate the thoroughly Christian heritage of the term.[2]

Intellect and Mystery in St Paul

Throughout Christian history, a measure of tension has existed between the intellectual and spiritual impulses of the faithful. While much theology (especially since the Enlightenment) has been typified by more intellectual emphases, the rapid proliferation of pentecostal-charismatic Christianity in the last century is just one expression of a faith that characteristically demotes 'cerebral theology and creedal formulae'.[3] The tension between intellectual and spiritual foci is sometimes perceived as a *defect* of the faith, but it may also be argued that it serves as a God-given safeguard against the error of idolizing either. No biblical author articulates this mystery better than St Paul.

Given his rigorous education under the illustrious Gamaliel, Paul is arguably the supreme example of a Christian intellectual in the apostolic age. It is telling that the vital intellectual transformation required for Paul to come to terms with the new place of the Gentiles in God's divine economy lasted several years, if not the entire remainder of his life.[4] Even a cursory assessment of Paul's thought shows the great weight he placed upon reason, but also the surprising ways in which he appropriated his intellectual achievements in service of an ultimate

[1] Nicholas Austin, 'The Ignatian Art of Moving Forward', *The Way* 61/3 (July 2022), 12.

[2] The Eastern Orthodox tradition has classically used this term to articulate its entire ethos. See Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1957).

[3] See Johnson Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, '"I Will Not Leave You Orphaned": Select Impactful Contributions of Global Pentecostalism to World Christianity', *Pneuma*, 42/3–4 (December 2020), 370–294, here 374; Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

[4] Reconciling Paul's autobiographical account in Galatians with information in other places is notoriously difficult, if not entirely impossible. Nevertheless, it is clear that Paul spent a considerable span of time processing his Damascus experience before he felt prepared to discuss his call with the church leaders in Jerusalem.

Paul the Apostle*, seventeenth century, artist unknown*

mission. Three Pauline passages illustrate this dynamic particularly well: 1 Corinthians 1–2, Ephesians 3 and 1 Timothy 3.[5]

The provocative statements made by Paul about human knowledge in 1 Corinthians 1:18–2:16 are among the most famous in scripture. Paul first quotes Isaiah 29:14: 'I will destroy the wisdom [σοφίαν] of the wise, and the discernment [σύνεσιν] of the discerning I will thwart' (1 Corinthians 1:19). He proceeds to build upon this future-facing prophetic vision by rooting it in the historical realities of the incarnation. Consequently, he incarnates his message by shifting focus from the abstract concept of wisdom to wise people themselves (ultimately culminating in the person of Christ): 'God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise [σοφούς]' (1 Corinthians 1:27).

The irony of Paul's own prestige as a former Pharisee could not have escaped his readers. It is within, and probably resulting from, this paradoxical context that we encounter one of his earliest uses of the term

[5] While I am well aware of the various arguments against Pauline authorship of Ephesians and 1 Timothy, I do not consider them ultimately convincing and side with the minority of scholars who maintain genuine authorship in one form or another. See Paul Foster, 'Who Wrote 2 Thessalonians? A Fresh Look at an Old Problem', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 35/2 (December 2012), 150–175.

'mystery' (μυστήριον), which he employs some twenty times throughout the *corpus Paulinum*. Paul understands 'mystery' not as contrary to his own intellectual prowess but as a sort of lens through which it can truly be situated against the empty wisdom of the world.

The beautiful language of Ephesians 3 includes more paradox and three more occurrences of 'mystery' (3:3, 3:4, 3:9). Here, however, Paul specifically uses this word to describe the previously unconscionable fact that the Gentiles have now been made 'fellow heirs' within the family of God. Although, in Galatians, Paul insists that his message for the Gentiles was received by divine revelation, it is also apparent that he made full use of his intellectual abilities and discernment to articulate that revelation in terms most constructive for fledgling Christian communities.[6] As in 1 Corinthians, Paul here resorts to paradoxical language to express profound spiritual experience: 'to know [γνῶναί] the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge [γνώσεως]' (Ephesians 3:19). As before, Paul is not diminishing the value of intellectual activity but rather promoting it as a legitimate, yet partial, way of approaching divine realities that are ultimately beyond our complete grasp.[7]

Perhaps most revealing is Paul's language in 1 Timothy 3. This pastoral epistle is filled with intimate writing and personal advice that requires keen discernment. Accordingly, Paul's use of 'mystery' in this context is the most unexpected of all. In 3:9, Paul instructs deacons to 'hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience'. If this 'mystery' were something opposed to intellectual activity, it is difficult to imagine how exactly these instructions could be followed. The fact that Paul speaks of a 'clear conscience' (καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει) recalls an earlier passage in the same letter:

> … instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith. But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. Some people have deviated from these and turned to meaningless talk …. (1:3–6)[8]

[6] Paul was probably trying—at least in part—to distance himself from negative aspects of his Pharisaical training in light of the damage being caused by the 'Judaizers' in Galatia.

[7] Although the terms 'apprehend' and 'comprehend' are commonly used interchangeably, theologically speaking God can be sufficiently apprehended for salvation but never fully comprehended. I use them with this specific understanding below.

[8] See also 1 Timothy 4: 2.

Thus, it would seem that the 'mystery' here functions especially to prevent leaders from getting carried away by fruitless intellectual activity, which can lead either to confusion or arrogance. For deacons, Paul sees the 'mystery' as being both clarifying and humbling. Ultimately, Paul concludes his practical instructions for deacons in chapter three by, once again, highlighting the mystery of the faith, which he expresses through the use of rhyming poetic verse.[9] This gracefully displays how intellectual discernment in the service of God can be shaped by the profound nature of the venture itself.

Several basic ideas about intellectual discernment can be culled from these various passages. Epistemologically speaking, it seems that Christian intellectual discernment has its ultimate *telos* in God, the source of all knowledge and wisdom. For Paul, it is not wrong to excel in intellectual activity, but discernment is required in knowing when such activity is being directed towards something other than Christ, who is the very wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:30). Paul does not isolate intellectual activity from other tasks but situates it within his overarching paradigm of a disciplined life holistically devoted to God (Romans 12:1–2).

While 'mystery' today sometimes conjures up ideas of uncertainty, secrecy or even deception, the Septuagint tradition upon which Paul builds communicates quite the opposite.[10] The divine mysteries of God are in fact the most reliable truths in Creation and, for that reason, are concealed from those unwilling to devote the type of intellectual discernment necessary to apprehend them.[11] Regardless of how exactly Paul might have described his personal method for practising intellectual discernment, it is evident that his years of Pharisaical training laid the groundwork for the monumental ways in which he articulates the implications of God's mysteries now revealed through the Christ event.

Somehow, Paul maintains his ability to debate effectively with the brightest minds in Athens while also recognising the acute inadequacy of his intellect in comprehending the full scope of God's mysteries. It is instructive to recall that Paul's conceptually brilliant letter to the Romans—sometimes regarded as his theological *magnum opus*—also

[9] The likelihood that the 3:16 represents an early credal formula should not cause us to overlook the obvious metrical and rhyming characteristics of this unique passage, which was probably recited to with a melody set to music.

[10] Despite the serious threat of various 'mystery religions' in late antiquity and the perpetual danger of resurgent 'gnostic' tendencies, the idea of mystery has remained vital throughout church history.

[11] Indeed, one of the main reasons the divine 'sacraments' have been so called throughout history is precisely because they communicate ultimate realities in ritual ways that words alone cannot match.

reiterates the deep concern for personal relationships noted in 1 Timothy. Romans 16 includes almost thirty individual names, exemplifying the inextricable link between intellectual discernment and pastoral concern in Paul's post-Damascus life.

Ephrem and Anastasios

Ephrem the Syrian and Anastasios of Sinai are quite different in their theology and thinking, but several similarities should be highlighted from the outset. Although Ephrem was never properly a monk, his ascetic lifestyle has been described as proto-monastic and thus bears resemblances to the more developed monastic system in which Anastasios participated several centuries later.[12] Both men were also heavily involved in combating heresy, which they believed prevented people from experiencing the true work of God in their lives. Indeed, the idea of God's indwelling in the believer is a prominent theme in both of their writings and each describes this phenomenon with impressive creativity.

Most important here is the deep respect both authors give to intellectual discernment, while exhorting their readers not to 'pry' into divine things beyond their comprehension.[13] Although the prevalence of 'mystery' in both writers is hardly surprising, the similar ways they discuss it is perhaps their strongest point of connection. Accepting the infinite mysteries of God is never an excuse to shrink from the discipline of intellectual discernment, but rather an impetus to strive ever harder to receive even just a few more 'crumbs' from God's table.[14]

Judging from an early index of hymns preserved at St Catherine's monastery, where Anastasios was active, it seems likely he was at least aware of Ephrem's work (although in Greek translation).[15] Slight similarities in style and language probably reflect influence from the Syriac tradition in general, but it is currently not possible to demonstrate that Anastasios pulled anything directly from any of Ephrem's work.

[12] See Sebastian P. Brock, 'Introduction', in *Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary, 1990), 26. For an excellent introduction to the thinking of Anastasios, see Joseph A. Munitiz, 'Introduction', in Anastasios of Sinai, *Questions and Answers*, edited and translated by Joseph A. Munitiz (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

[13] Ephrem writes: 'There is intellectual enquiry in the Church, /Investigating what is revealed: /The intellect was not intended to pry into hidden things', quoted in Brock, 'Introduction', 45; and see *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, translated by Sebastian P. Brock and George Anton Kiraz (Provo: Brigham Young University, 2006), 211.

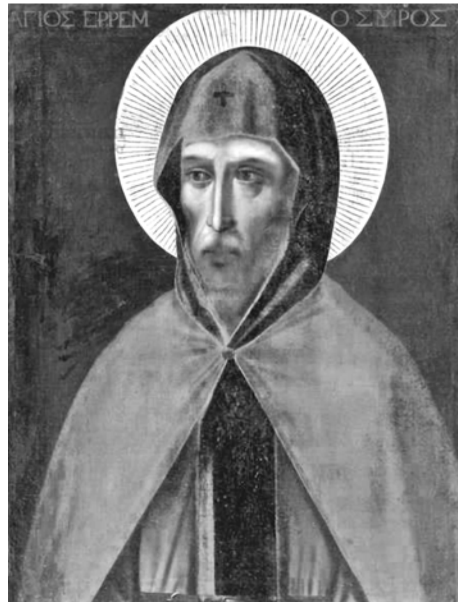
[14] This metaphor is one of Ephrem's most characteristic. See *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, 213.

[15] Brock, 'Introduction', 36.

Ephrem: Faith Adoring the Mystery

Ephrem stands out in Christian history for his wisdom and is venerated in several different traditions. Perhaps the best way to summarise Ephrem's thought is to juxtapose it with that of another seminal figure. Anselm's dictum '*fides quaerens intellectum*' (faith seeking understanding) both summarised and propelled much of Western theology. In contrast, Sydney Griffith has argued that Ephrem's approach is one of 'faith adoring the mystery'.[16] This is confirmed by Sebastian Brock: 'Ephrem's approach to theology … avoids—indeed abhors—definitions, which he regards as boundaries (Latin *fines*) that impose limits; his own method, by contrast, is to proceed by way of paradox and symbol'.[17] By accepting our own cognitive limitations, we are free to marvel at God's limitlessness.

Ephrem was known not just for his intellectual brilliance but also for his humility and remarkable acts of charity. When severe famine struck Edessa, he abandoned his normal life to devote himself entirely to caring for the sick.[18] The posthumous account that describes Ephrem's dramatic ploy to avoid becoming a bishop is probably an embellishment, but it nevertheless touches upon the shock felt by many of his readers on learning that Ephrem never advanced beyond the position of deacon. Ephrem was deeply pastoral and prioritised solidarity with common Christians, even if it required feigning insanity like King David.[19]



Ephrem the Syrian, ***by Giuseppe Franchi, early seventeenth century***

While certainly aware of the proceedings of the Council of Nicea, Ephrem did not know

[16] See Sidney Griffith, *Faith Adoring the Mystery: Reading the Bible with St Ephraem the Syrian* (Milwaukee: Marquette U, 1997).
[17] Sebastian P. Brock, *The Luminous Eye* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian, 1992), 14.
[18] Brock, 'Introduction', 14–15.
[19] See 1 Samuel 21:10–14.

Greek and seems to have deliberately avoided learning it because of what he perceived as the inherent dangers associated with Greek ways of thinking. Brock elaborates:

> To Ephrem, theological definitions are not only potentially dangerous, but they can also be blasphemous. They can be dangerous because, by providing 'boundaries', they are likely to have a deadening and fossilizing effect on people's conception of the subject of enquiry, which is, after all, none other than the human experience of God. Dogmatic 'definitions' can moreover, in Ephrem's eyes, be actually blasphemous when these definitions touch upon some aspect of God's Being: for by trying to 'define' God one is in effect attempting to contain the Uncontainable, to limit the Limitless.[20]

These convictions lead Ephrem to adopt a 'poetical approach' to theology, which stands in marked contrast to the discursive reasoning of both the Greek and Latin traditions.[21] Ephrem's voluminous hymns and poetry were regularly performed and praised in his own lifetime and left an indelible impact upon the entire Syriac tradition, earning him the nickname 'harp of the Spirit'.

Ephrem's poetical approach should not be misinterpreted as somehow anti- or sub-intellectual. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Ephrem was passionate about guarding the orthodox faith and expended much of his energy denouncing the various heresies of his day. An important concept in Ephrem's thought has to do with attempts to 'grasp' or possess truths that fundamentally exceed human intellect:

> A person who seeks after truth with a grudging spirit cannot gain knowledge even if he actually encounters it, for envy has clouded his mind and he does not get any the wiser, even if he grabs at that knowledge.[22]

Like Paul, Ephrem clearly viewed arrogance and envy as hindering the type of intellectual discernment that is prompted by the wonder of God's inexhaustible wisdom. Several passages suggest that Ephrem is more concerned with developing greater *intellectual capacity* for pondering the things of God than merely amassing great amounts of knowledge—which

[20] Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 23–24.
[21] Serafim Seppälä, 'The Concept of Deification in Greek and Syriac', *Review of Ecumenical Studies Sibiu*, 11/3 (2019), 448.
[22] Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Faith*, 17.1, quoted in Sebastian P. Brock, 'Theology through Poetry: The Example of St Ephrem', in *Singer of the Word of God* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2020), 91–102, here 96.

can easily blur our vision of God. Tightly gripping old knowledge can prevent people from experiencing the full freedom given by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

At the core of Ephrem's thinking lies his nuanced conception of God's mystery (*raza*) as ultimate truth (*shrara*).[23] In stark contrast to modern materialism that prioritises empirical data above all, Ephrem upholds the ancient (Semitic) conviction that all perceptible knowledge is actually a sort of derivative metaphor or 'shadow' of the ultimate cosmic truths. Accordingly, he frequently marvels at the ways that God has chosen to 'clothe' Godself in human language that we can understand—although only with God's help.[24]

> With His Begetter His birth is certain, but to the investigator it is fraught with difficulty; to supernal beings its truth is crystal clear, but to those below, a subject of enquiry and hesitation—yet one which cannot be investigated![25]

Anastasios: Divine Indwelling

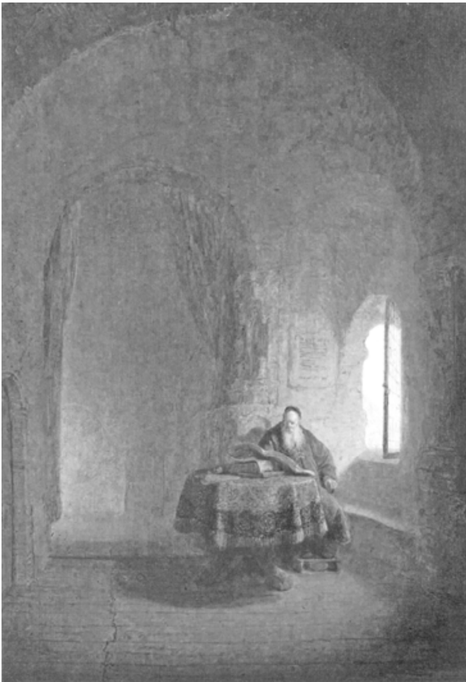
We know quite little about the life of Anastasios. Like Ephrem, Anastasios never advanced in the church hierarchy, even though it seems likely that he could have become *hegoumenos* (ἡγούμενος) or even bishop if that had been his ultimate desire. Although not widely known in church history, and probably not as erudite as Ephrem, he developed a notable reputation as a writer and his works have survived as a sizeable collection of manuscripts.[26]

Joseph Munitiz described Anastasios as a 'polemical yet kindly figure' whose thought is suffused by 'fluency and characteristic idiosyncrasy'.[27] Indeed, the writings of Anastasios exhibit a conscious departure from several norms of his day and some clever solutions for unprecedented dilemmas faced by Christians.[28] Despite his passionate attacks on heretical deviations from the faith, Anastasios was eager to modify unrealistic expectations for common Christians because he knew that their

[23] Brock, 'Introduction', 42.
[24] Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 211.
[25] *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, 93.
[26] Perhaps the two most important are the *Hodegos* ('handbook')—which provides careful discussion of heresies and theology for monks—and the *Questions and Answers*, which addresses sundry concerns from lay Christians of the time. This section mostly draws from the latter.
[27] Munitiz, 'Introduction', 9.
[28] Anastasios famously made use of illustrations and diagrams to strengthen his arguments with heretics in Alexandria.

motivations were pure. Munitiz accurately highlighted some 'paternalistic' tendencies in the responses of Anastasios, but this seems understandable given the silliness of the puzzling questions he was asked throughout his career.[29] Anastasios, like Ephrem, often discusses the mystery of God and specifically quotes 1 Corinthians 2 on numerous occasions.[30]

An important example of his theological adaptability can be seen as access to churches and services decreased because of Arab incursions. He legitimises use of the *skeuophorion* (σκευοφόριον) or pyx (q.64) and insists that actual church buildings are incidental to the activity of God in one's heart (q.6). When answering a question about dreams, he readily acknowledges the fact that they can be caused by various 'preoccupations' or by 'one's digestion' (q.72:1). He finally settles with the following admonition: 'So any dreams you see that lead you to compunction, and improvement, and conversion, and fear of God, these and only these you should cherish' (q.72:2).[31]



St Anastasius, ***by Rembrandt van Rijn,*** **c.*1660***

In the course of his creative responses, Anastasios is always careful to indicate when he is departing from the normative views of the church authorities and makes clear when he is giving his own opinion. Perhaps as a result of this, he also distinguishes between normal and 'more divine' mysteries (q.6:1), which he seems to think can only be apprehended by some Christians. Regardless, he upholds the honour of living a godly life among 'worldly things and children' (q.88) and firmly

[29] Munitiz, 'Introduction', 16. Questions put to Anastasios concern whether the night comes before day, receiving omens from random Bible passages (*lachmeterion*; λαχμητήριον), eating camel meat, the *ephoud* (a Jewish priestly garment), and even nocturnal emissions.

[30] See questions 3, 5, 6, 28, and so on, in Anastasios of Sinai, *Questions and Answers* (subsequent references in the text).

[31] It is worth noting that Anastasios here describes the soul as 'rational and gifted with intellect'.

rejects the idea that one can only truly be saved by practising ascetic solitude in the desert.

Anastasios' theological creativity, like Ephrem's, is tempered by keen awareness of the proper boundaries of the intellect. He uses a variety of terms to articulate the type of intellectual activity that crosses the line of what God intends, including 'pry', 'poke', and 'cross-examine' (ψηλαφάω) (q.9). Close reading reveals that the intrinsic problem with these approaches is their impure or misguided intentions. He remarks that arrogance is present even when someone is 'completely convinced that he or she is doing something good, not paying attention to the words <of Scripture>' (q.31) and therefore argues the importance of being content with what God has disclosed to us:

> All that makes up a Christian and the mysteries which a Christian holds, is faith. But true faith is a simple [ἀπεριέργος] assent, since if we start to poke into the words and deeds of Scripture and of God, we are lost and we are drawn into the depths of incredulity. (q.22:1)

Like Paul and Ephrem, Anastasios does not condemn intellectual pursuits but rather argues that 'logical thinking [λογισμός] should be humbled' (q.51:1). Indeed, when pressed to provide the most helpful advice to lay Christians, Anastasios asserts the inadequacy of intellectual efforts if separated from the fullness of the faith: 'Therefore make an effort to learn these things in action and by experience, not by simple word which is of no help' (q.3:4).

Ultimately, the creative licence Anastasios affords himself and his readers is built upon the bedrock of *divine indwelling*, which fosters a sense of wonder and guarantees purity of motive. He uses a rich variety of terminology to describe the role of the human in this relationship, including 'tent', 'altar', 'sanctuary', 'organ' and 'God-made temple' (q.6:4).[32] He seems content to preserve the mystery of this spiritual reality by speaking alternately of the divine indwelling of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and sometimes even the 'fullness of the Trinity' (q.6). His interlocutors, however, are perpetually discontented in their pursuit of practical advice, and when asked how one can know 'if Christ has taken up his abode inside one?' (q.2) Anastasios cleverly illustrates the ways it should be just as obvious as a foetus is to a pregnant woman!

[32] And compare 1 Corinthians 3:16–7, 6:19.

Most intriguing for an understanding of intellectual discernment is the way that Anastasios reconciles divine indwelling with our 'intellectual capacities':

> Therefore we learn from these words that by the faith and fine deeds the house of the soul is built up by our *intellectual capacities* [*nous*]; however if the owner of the house, Christ, does not come and live in us, it is clear that he is not pleased by the structure that has been brought into being by us for him. (q.1:2, emphasis added)

Just like Ephrem, Anastasios sees human intellectual endeavours as vital in the process of approaching God but woefully unable to 'grasp' God by force.

In the end, Anastasios demonstrates a 'powerful pastoral preoccupation'. Even though he was tenacious in his use of precise, technical language against heretics in Alexandria, he simultaneously ensured that his advice given to lay Christians remained 'firmly rooted in the *ordinary language* of ordinary people'. To summarise Anastasios' motivations as 'pragmatic' would not be entirely correct, because he recognises that much of God's instruction does not make sense to worldly people. Rather, Munitiz astutely underscores how Anastasios 'prizes discernment, the power to distinguish the movements of the spirit within the soul, the wisdom to separate what is willed by God from what is plotted by the devil'.[33] For Anastasios, intellectual discernment is not so much about acquiring expertise in a particular realm of knowledge as about assessing the value of an intellectual claim within the cosmic trajectories of God: 'Wherever God dwells and walks about, there *all knowledge is at home*' (q.3:1, emphasis added).

Brilliance and Humility

It is apparent that both Ephrem and Anastasios are marked simultaneously by intellectual brilliance and humility. Ephrem's use of poetry and paradox delicately preserves the 'treasures' of God's mysteries in a way that the discursive reasoning of the Greeks never did. Ephrem's intellectual rigour did not require detailed knowledge of the great rhetoricians but rather a pure, unmitigated wonder at the mysteries of God.[34]

Anastasios was an imperfect theologian who probably never acted as a 'key player on the stage of history', but nevertheless embraced the

[33] Munitiz, 'Introduction', 14, 16, 18.
[34] *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, 107, 195, 213.

jumbled concerns of ordinary Christians with all of his intellectual abilities.[35] The increasingly difficult realities of Christian life during the time of Anastasios propelled him in his pastoral vocation and gave him boldness to renounce the idealistic expectations of his predecessors—even if it cost him clerical advancement. Like Ephrem, Anastasios cherishes God's mysteries as the ultimate foil to unhealthy obsessions with theological pedantry and perfectionism.

Elements of Christian Intellectual Discernment

Humility

The first undeniable element of Christian intellectual discernment is that it is *humbling*. The virtue of humility is rightly upheld as a vital foundation for all Christian action; but I am suggesting that a *result* of true discernment is to make its practitioners more humble. How else can we respond when our attempts to 'plumb the depths' of Creation make us more cognisant simultaneously of God's greatness and our own finitude?[36] Intellectual achievements—especially within academia—notoriously breed the type of 'puffed up' attitude that Paul denounces in the letters considered.[37] Christian intellectuals should not merely guard against feelings of pride but should consider how their endeavours might actively humble them in light of God's wisdom. Key here is a willingness to embrace the type of wonder that continually surprises us and disrupts presuppositions.

To embrace the type of wonder that continually surprises us

Paradox

Christian intellectual discernment is also deeply *paradoxical*. It is noteworthy that Paul, Ephrem and Anastasios all resort to the language of 'mystery' despite their impressive mental dexterity. As I have argued, this type of language is not an escape from the demands of articulating complex ideas. Rather, it supremely expresses the paradox of how one can eternally grow in knowledge of God's mysteries without ever diminishing them. Strangely, it seems that the more we absorb and process aspects of Creation with Christian discernment, the more we are drawn

[35] Munitiz, 'Introduction', 10.
[36] See Job 11: 7.
[37] See 1 Corinthians 4: 6; Colossians 2: 18; 1 Timothy 3: 6.

towards the 'singleness' of the Creator.[38] What if our goal as intellectuals was not to attain the greatest answers possible but to experience the greatest sense of wonder possible? More provocatively, what if the greatest possible 'answer' is wonder itself?

Paul's indictment of worldly wisdom as 'foolishness' apart from God should remind Christian thinkers that intellectual 'progress' is always at risk of acting as a wedge between us and God. Again, I quote from Nicholas Austin's perceptive article:

> One might actually succeed in measuring up to the ideal one sets oneself, resulting in an insufferable pride in one's own achievement and disdain for those who do not, as exhibited by the Pharisee in the parable (Luke 18:9–14).[39]

Using metaphors from Paul and Anastasios, I propose that the task of Christian intellectual discernment is less like constructing an elaborate edifice of knowledge and more like building a beautiful, spacious sanctuary in which God's mysteries can be manifested and adored. Even as we struggle to make *cataphatic* observations about God's wonder-ful Creation, we must leave space for the *apophatic* confessions that inevitably result from our best intellectual efforts.

Inexhaustible Mystery

Relatedly, intellectual discernment is evidently *inexhaustible*. This is true at the individual level, but most profoundly observed diachronically. Christian tradition functions like a grand relay race across time so that through God's many servants 'the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places'.[40] Paul, Ephrem and Anastasios are all indebted to the intellectuals before them and confess the need for others to finish what they have begun.

The fact that one can never arrive at the end of God's mysteries should inspire rather than depress. Indeed, insatiable curiosity about the good and intricate created order forms the very foundation of the modern scientific enterprise. Christians should recognise that intellectual discernment involves a perpetual cycle of enquiry, discovery and wonder.

[38] Matthew 6:22.
[39] Austin, 'Ignatian Art of Moving Forward', 12
[40] Ephesians 3:10; see Hebrews 11.

Owing to the inexhaustible nature of this enterprise, it is imperative that we guard against the burnout so prevalent in our day. In fact, a key concern of Christian intellectual activity should be to fortify the type of 'clear conscience' that never loses the ability to marvel at God's mysteries.

Sacrifice and Suffering

It is also clear that intellectual discernment is *sacrificial*. The importance of suffering for Christ is well known but not usually associated with intellectual activities. What might it look like to embrace suffering in the process of intellectual discernment? Could it be that our call to focus on questions of eternal value result in diminished professional progress, as it did for Ephrem and Anastasios? Is it possible that industrious attempts to verbalise God's mysteries to a fractured world could result in personal frustration, depression and even anguish?

The moment of Christ's own anguish in Gethsemane leads me to conclude that suffering involving the intellect is supremely realised in prayer. Holding the full wickedness of our world in tension with the full Goodness of God is certainly one dimension of the 'mourning' mentioned by Jesus.[41] The perennial Christian temptation is to dismiss one of these extremes. If we shield ourselves from the details of the world's utter depravity, we are in danger of domesticating our deep need for God; on the other hand, if, like Peter, we allow our minds to focus only on the waves of chaos around us, it is likely that we will lose the courage to pray at all. To comprehend the afflictions of our neighbours and wrestle to expose them to God's Light without ourselves collapsing in despair requires the utmost intellectual discernment.

Relationship

Penultimately, Christian intellectuals must be continually mindful of the *relational* implications of their work. We have seen how both Ephrem and Anastasios devoted themselves to pastoral care. Whereas much of modern intellectual activity is concerned with disembodied 'truth' that is unentangled by the biases of subjective human communities; Christian intellectual discernment can never dismiss the uncomfortable ways that lived subjectivities impact the global Body of Christ.

[41] Matthew 5:4.

This requires something like what Heraclitus famously called 'xunesis' (ξὔνεσῐς)—knowledge that connects to the real needs of people.[42] It is significant that, by the first century AD, ξὔνεσῐς has become σύνεσις, the word noted above in 1 Corinthians 1:19 and is often translated into English as 'discernment'.[43] The examples of Paul, Ephrem and Anastasios suggest that, in the Christian context, the relevance of knowledge is primarily assessed for the ways that it benefits people within the *Missio Dei* of the Divine Economy. Just as God commanded the Israelites not to be 'tight-fisted' towards the 'needy neighbour' with the blessings God had given them (Deuteronomy 15:7), we must always hold our intellectual abilities and achievements loosely—always ready to lay them aside or appropriate them in service of others.

The Spirit

Finally, Christian intellectual activity must be *Spirit-powered*. If we take seriously the words of Paul, Ephrem and Anastasios, we must agree that Christians are somehow capable of perceiving aspects of reality hidden from those not 'inhabited' by God. One of our most vital tasks as intellectuals must be to 'translate' these divinely imparted realities through the help of the Holy Spirit into language that will help others more fully experience the Love of God.

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[42] Patricia Kenig Curd, 'Knowledge and Unity in Heraclitus', *The Monist*, 74/4 (1991), 531–549.
[43] σύνεσις is also found in Ephesians 3:4. And compare 1 Chronicles 1:10, Job 12:20, and elsewhere in the Septuagint.

THE SPIRITUAL MASTERS OF POPE FRANCIS

Hugo Rahner, Miguel Á. Fiorito, Gaston Fessard

Santiago Madrigal Terrazas

SPIRITUALITY HAS AN EXCEPTIONAL PLACE in the missionary reform desired and promoted by Pope Francis. This is clear from his words in the apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*: 'in *Evangelii gaudium* I concluded by speaking of a spirituality of mission, in *Laudato si'* of an ecological spirituality, and in *Amoris laetitia* of a spirituality of family life' (n. 28). Clearly, from his first programmatic text onwards he has insisted on the urgent task facing our epoch: all the people of God have to prepare to undertake 'with the Spirit' a new stage of evangelization.[1]

Finding the Ignatian Roots of Pope Francis: 'Our Way of Proceeding'

The aim of these pages is to identify those spiritual roots that have inspired over the years the reform enterprise of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, first as a simple member of the Society of Jesus, then as provincial, then as pastor of a megalopolis such as Buenos Aires and finally as bishop of Rome. No doubt, at the base of his resolve one finds the Exercises of St Ignatius. In 2006 the then Cardinal Bergoglio gave the Spiritual Exercises to the Spanish bishops. His talks and meditations were published later under the title *In Him Alone Is Our Hope*: this publication will help us when we come to evaluate his personal appropriation of Ignatian spirituality. He writes there:

> The Lord sends us to a spiritual combat. It is a fight to the death waged by the Lord in which we are invited to find our assigned posts, aware that the war is of God. It is waged 'against the enemy of human nature', as Ignatius calls the Devil. As such it is on behalf of the

[1] See Santiago Madrigal Terrazas, 'Aproximación a una mística eclesial: evangelizadores con Espíritu desde el espíritu del Vaticano II', in *Él giro eclesiológico en la recepción del Vaticano II* (Maliaño: Sal Terrae, 2017), 455–477.

> 'friend of human nature', the Lord who wants to conquer us for God and to recapitulate in himself all that is good in creation so as to offer it to the Father, for his glory.[2]

This fragment synthesizes the Ignatian inheritance by following the line of one of the most characteristic contemplations in the Spiritual Exercises, the meditation on the Two Standards. In what follows we will try to discover how the Jesuit Bergoglio received and assimilated the spiritual legacy of St Ignatius from the years of his theological formation. As we shall see, his appropriation of the main source of the Ignatian charism bears the seal of three great masters: Hugo Rahner, Miguel Ángel Fiorito and Gaston Fessard.

Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, St Ignatius had sketched out a luminous path for the development of the mission of the Roman Catholic Church in the challenging period when the foundations were being laid of modern civilisation and culture. This project, which made explicit what he had experienced in his interior conversion, embraced both the education of children and scientific university culture; evangelization in the far off West and East Indies; social action among the most indigent; and the struggle to maintain Catholic unity in the face of the complex cultural and religious phenomenon of the Reformation.[3] All that Ignatius felt to be the will of God in that historic moment has been summed up in the phrase, 'our way of proceeding'. This was the project that Jorge Mario Bergoglio embraced and in which he was trained by his entry into the Society of Jesus on 11 March 1958.

We can begin with the most elementary question: what was it that moved the present Pope to take the decision to join the Society of Jesus? Jorge Mario Bergoglio entered the seminary of Buenos Aires (located in Villa Devoto) that had been entrusted to the Jesuits. Although he had felt attracted to the Dominicans—as he confesses by way of autobiography—he chose the sons of St Ignatius. Three features in the Society of Jesus had impressed him: 'its missionary character, the community, and the discipline'. But when asked which aspect of Ignatian spirituality

[2] Jorge Mario Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza. Ejercicios espirituales a los obispos españoles* (Madrid: BAC, 2013), 3, 63 n.44. English translation: *In Him Alone Is Our Hope: Spiritual Exercises Given to His Brother Bishops in the Manner of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, translated by Vincent Capuano and Andrew Matt (New York: Magnificat, 2013). And see Santiago Madrigal, 'Él combate espiritual. Las raíces Ignacianas de Francisco', in *De pirámides y poliédros. Señas de identidad del pontificado de Francisco* (Maliaño: Sal Terrae, 2020), 237–276.

[3] See Jorge Mario Bergoglio, '¿Qué son los jesuitas? Origen, espiritualidad, características propias' , in *Reflexiones espirituales sobre la vida apostólica* (Buenos Aires: Diego de Torres, 1987), 245–262.

was his greatest help in living his Petrine ministry he replied unhesitatingly, 'discernment'. He added: 'Discernment is one of the things that Ignatius has most developed in his heart. For him it is a weapon by which to know the Lord better and to follow Him more nearly'.[4]

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Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Miguel Ángel Fiorito

Not only does this idea of discernment as a *weapon* recur frequently on the lips of Bergoglio but it foreshadows the nucleus of his understanding of Ignatian spirituality.[5] Who brought him close to this interpretation of the Ignatian charism? His biographers have emphasized that during his theological studies the young Jesuit was strongly influenced 'by the renewal of the Ignatian vision that had been set in motion by his philosophy professor, Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito', an indefatigable seeker for a return to the primitive and foundational charism of the Society of Jesus.[6]

The Ignatian Charism and Pastoral Style of Pope Francis: 'Master Fiorito' and the Path of Discernment

On 13 December 2019, Francis took part in the presentation of the works of Miguel Ángel Fiorito (1916–2005), which took place in the General Curia of the Society of Jesus.[7] There he said the following: 'Master Fiorito'—as he was called in the Argentinian province of the Society of Jesus—'taught us the path of discernment'. Then in an autobiographical tone he added:

> I met Fiorito in 1961 when I returned from my juniorate in Chile. He was Professor of Metaphysics at the Colegio Máximo de San José, our house of formation in San Miguel, in the province of Buenos

4 Antonio Spadaro, 'Entrevista. Papa Francisco: Busquemos ser una Iglesia que encuentra caminos nuevos', *Razón y Fe*, 268 (2013), 249–276, 252, 253–254.
5 Jorge Maria Bergoglio, *Meditaciones para religiosos* (Buenos Aires: Diego de Torres, 1982), 193.
6 Massimo Borghesi, *The Mind of Pope Francis: Jorge Mario Bergoglio's Intellectual Journey*, translated by Barry Hudock (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2018), 2; and see Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt, 2014), 75.
7 Miguel Ángel Fiorito, *Escritos*, edited by José Luis Narvaja, 5 volumes (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 2019).

> Aires. From then on I began to confide in him, and to receive his spiritual direction. He underwent at that time a profound process that would lead him to give up teaching philosophy in order to devote himself wholly to writing on spirituality and the giving of the Exercises. Volume II, dealing with the years 1961–62, has just one article: 'The Christocentrism of the "Principle and Foundation" of Saint Ignatius'. Just one article, but which was inspirational for me. It was there that I began to become familiar with some of the authors who have accompanied me ever since: Guardini, Hugo Rahner with his book on the historical genesis of the spirituality of Saint Ignatius, Gaston Fessard and his Dialectic of the Exercises.[8]

These remarks allow us to underline some aspects. Firstly, his biographers have noted how the reading of Romano Guardini has contributed to the formulation of the four principles dear to Bergoglio as he took over the theory of 'polar opposition', the key notion in *Der Gegensatz* (1925).[9] Next, some passages in the encyclical *Laudato sí* rely on *Das Ende der Neuzeit* (1950).[10] However, under the influence of Fiorito, other works by this Italian-German theologian had attracted the interest of Bergoglio: *Der Herr* (1949), *Das Wesen des Christentums* (1929) and, especially, *Das Bild von Jesus dem Christus im Neuen Testament* (1936).[11] Pope Francis remarked: 'Fiorito noted at that time "the coincidence between the image of the Lord, especially in Saint Paul, as explained by Guardini, and the image of the Lord as we believe we find it in the Exercises of Saint Ignatius"'.[12]

On the other hand, Pope Francis confesses that Gaston Fessard (1897–1987) has had a great influence on him. He says that he has read 'several times *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace de Loyola* (1956): the first contact with the French Jesuit took place in the

[8] Pope Francis, 'Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito: Pope Francis' Spiritual Director', *La Civiltà Cattolica* (22 December 2019), available at https://www.laciviltacattolica.com/father-miguel-angel-fiorito-pope-francis-spiritual-director/. And see Miguel Ángel Fiorito, 'Cristocentrismo del Principio y Fundamento de San Ignacio', *Escritos*, volume 2, 27–51; 'La opción personal de S. Ignacio: Cristo o Satanás', *Escritos*, volume 1, 162–183, at 164; Gaston Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace de Loyola* (Paris: Aubier, 1956); English translation, *The Dialectic of the* Spiritual Exercises *of St Ignatius of Loyola*, translated by James G. Colbert and Oliva Blanchette (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

[9] Romano Guardini, *Der Gegensatz. Versuche zu einer Philosophie des Lebendig-Konkreten* (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1955).

[10] English translation: Romano Guardini, *The End of the Modern World: A Search for Orientation*, translated by Joseph Theman and Herbert Burke (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956).

[11] English translation: Romano Guardini, *The Lord*, translated by Elinor Castendyk Briefs (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2002); *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Würzburg: Werkbund, 1937); *Das Bild von Jesus dem Christus im Neuen Testament* (Würzburg: Werkbund, 1936).

[12] Pope Francis, 'Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito', quoting Miguel Ángel Fiorito, 'Cristocentrismo del Principio y fundamento de San Ignacio', 51 note 88.

biennium 1962–1964'.[13] As we shall see, Fiorito and Fessard converge very closely in their interpretation of the Exercises, so that both are of decisive importance in the intellectual and spiritual biography of Bergoglio.

This is a point insisted upon by Jacques Servais in his study of the theologians who have influenced Pope Francis's reading of the *Spiritual Exercises*: it was Fiorito who initiated the young Jesuit Bergoglio in the study of the Ignatian Exercises, but who also promoted and encouraged the interpretation of Gaston Fessard with his notion of 'dialectic'—that is to say, the tension between grace and liberty which (in contrast to Hegel) find their reconciliation in the Mystery of a God who is active in history. Servais adds to the names of Romano Guardini, Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar that of Erich Przywara, with his monumental work *Deus semper maior*, a theology of the Exercises that Bergoglio quotes via the abbreviated synthesis *Teologumeno español* (1962).[14]

Returning to the autobiographical comment noted above, another name worth mentioning is that of Hugo Rahner (1900–1968). In fact, Bergoglio gives special importance to this German Jesuit because it was he who sealed the conversion of Fiorito to spirituality and who set a seal also on 'a whole era in the life of our Province and would shape so much of what in my pontificate is related to discernment and spiritual accompaniment'.[15] According to Pope Francis, Hugo Rahner imprinted these three graces on the souls of the master (Fiorito) and his disciples:

> … that of the Ignatian *magis*, which was the sign of the capacious soul of Ignatius and the limitless scope of his desires; that of the *discernment* of spirits, which allowed the saint to channel this potentiality free of pointless diversions and unnecessary obstacles; and that of *charitas discreta*, which flowered in the soul of Ignatius as his own contribution to the ongoing struggle between Christ and Satan. Those battle lines were not foreign to the saint, but passed directly through his very soul, and thus divided it into two I's that were the only two possible alternatives for the fundamental choice he had made.[16]

[13] Pope Francis, radio interview, 3 January 2017, quoted in Borghesi, *Mind of Pope Francis,* 6: *biennium* is a Jesuit term used to refer to the years allocated for doctoral work.
[14] Jacques Servais, 'Jorge Bergoglio and the Theologians Who Shaped His Readings of the *Spiritual Exercises*', *Gregorianum*, 99/3 (2018), 483–507, at 488. The Spanish work mentioned is a collection of translated essays by Przywara published by Ediciones Guadarrama in 1962.
[15] Pope Francis, 'Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito'.
[16] Miguel Ángel Fiorito, 'La opción personal de S. Ignacio', 163–164, quoted in Pope Francis, 'Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito'.

Fiorito discovered in Hugo Rahner's book *The Spirituality of St Ignatius Loyola: An Account of Its Historical Development* the substantial elements of Ignatian spirituality, pointing out that the heart of its dynamic can be summed up in the maxim, *Non coerceri maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est*: 'to feel no fright before the greatest, attentive to the least .... Reaching out to what is beyond, attentive also to what is near'.[17] We will return shortly to this maxim, the authentic origin of which was clarified by a German scholar: it is not, despite what Hölderlin thought and wrote, a phrase written on the tomb of Ignatius in the church of the Gesù in Rome, but a fragment of the *Elogium sepulcrale S. Ignatii* written by an anonymous author and included in the monumental work *Imago primi saeculi*, published in Antwerp (1640) to commemorate the first centenary of the Society of Jesus.

On the other hand, Fiorito claimed that there was a real embryonic christology in the Principle and Foundation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, since, 'when Saint Ignatius uses the expression "the Lord our God" he is speaking concretely of Christ, of the Word made flesh, Lord not only of history but also of our practical life'.[18] Fiorito was thus a member of the pioneer group of interpreters of the Exercises which has tried to develop the christology of the Principle and Foundation in order to point out that the thread of the election is the guide to all spiritual experience. Bergoglio, as a self-confessed disciple of 'Master Fiorito', opted decisively for the christological interpretation of the Spiritual Exercises (Exx 23). This can be seen in the text of the Exercises that he gave to the Spanish bishops when he speaks of 'looking at the Lord'. In his commentary there are echoes of Fiorito, Rahner and Guardini:

> In this Principle and Foundation, when Ignatius tells us what sort of attitudes we should have, as creatures who have been saved and are seeking their salvation, he shows us the image of Christ, our creator and saviour. And when he presents us with the programme of indifference and discreet charity in order to choose 'what leads us most', he presents us with 'Christ *semper maior*', with 'God *semper maior*', with 'the one who is *intimior intimo meo*'. This image of the '*Deus semper maior*' is the most characteristic of Ignatius, that which draws us out of ourselves and raises us to praise, to reverence, and

[17] Miguel Ángel Fiorito, 'La opción personal de S. Ignacio', 163–164. And see Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St Ignatius Loyola: An Account of Its Historical Development*, translated by Francis John Smith (Chicago: Loyola, 1953). The author refers to the Spanish edition: *La genesis de la histórica formación spiritual de S. Ignacio*.

[18] Pope Francis, 'Father Miguel Ángel Fiorito'.

> to desire to follow more closely and to be of better service. By this Lord, and for him, 'the human person is created' (Exx 23).[19]

In this brief extract, there are resonances of the *Deus semper maior* stressed by Erich Przywara. Bergoglio follows in the same line as he considers that image of God to be the one 'most characteristic of Ignatius'. This is corroborated by other reflections of Bergoglio during his time as Jesuit superior, when he pointed out the Jesuit inheritance that had to be left to future generations:

> The God whom we have inherited is Jesus, the manifestation and the concealment of the 'God always greater'. In Him the divine transcendence has married our immanence. In Him can be seen the foundation of the well-known dictum: *Non coerceri maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est*.[20]

Gaston Fessard and the Discovery of Spiritual Dialectic: The Liberty of Man and the Grace of God

In his article 'Teoría y práctica de los Ejercicios espirituales según G. Fessard' (1957), Fiorito had made a full and detailed review of the work of the French Jesuit. He pointed out that *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels* is really an exegesis of three texts: the book of the Exercises itself; the *Elogium sepulcrale S. Ignatii*; and the Ignatian dictum of Gabriel Henevesi, a Hungarian Jesuit of the eighteenth century.

Fessard knew how to situate Ignatian spirituality within the frame of a theological interpretation of history and of the relations between human liberty and divine grace. His study of the Exercises, combining theory and practice, brings into relief the central point, namely the *election* of a state of life 'as being the point where human liberty and divine grace coincide, the act whose dialectic constitutes the history of human beings on the earth'. Given such a horizon, one can understand why he gave special attention to the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. The other key point is the consideration of the election as 'the characteristic situation of human liberty'.[21]

It is the central role of the *election* that determines the division of the Exercises into four weeks; their themes are, respectively, meditation

[19] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza*, 10 n. 7.
[20] Bergoglio, *Meditaciones para religiosos*, 35.
[21] Miguel Ángel Fiorito, 'Teoría y práctica de los Ejercicios espirituales según Gaston Fessard', *Escritos*, volume 1, 233–250, here 235.

on sin, contemplation of the mysteries of the public life of the Lord, His passion and cross, and contemplation of his resurrection and glory. The election is strategically placed at the end of the Second Week. The mysteries of Christ are distributed *before* and *after* the personal election so that they form the objective plot of the Exercises. Therefore, Fessard adopts a dialectical pattern for the election with two elements *before* (the First and Second Week) and two *after* (Third and Fourth Week).[22] He believes, moreover, that Ignatius has rejected the traditional pattern of the Three Ways—purgative, illuminative and unitive—in favour of his personal division into the four Weeks. Fiorito comments:

> The *temporal* pattern of the Four Weeks turns out to be more practical than the *spatial* one of the three Ways; it is also more convenient for the spiritual direction of all sorts of souls because it does not create the false problem of knowing to which level of perfection one may have reached—purgation, illumination or union—but rather presents one with the true problem of knowing the point of perfection to which one should be tending.[23]

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Gaston Fessard in 1927

This approach fits well with the God that Ignatius would like to make present in the spirit of the exercitant: the *Deus semper maior*. Within the Exercises there is a steely internal unity, 'the circularity of the Spiritual Exercises', from the Principle and Foundation to the Contemplation to Attain Love. This is because the aim is to arrive at a state where one lives fully in grace by a unique act of human liberty in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, Fessard is offering a *synthetic* vision of the Exercises, such that in his internal dialectic they are reduced to an *instant*: the meeting of human liberty with the will of God who intervenes

[22] Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*, 27–41.
[23] Fiorito, 'Teoría y práctica de los Ejercicios espirituales según Gaston Fessard', 239.

in my personal history. This instant is not confined to the time of the Exercises but rather is actualised in daily life.

At the end of his book, where he deals with the Contemplation to Attain Love, Fessard has recourse to the E*logium sepulcrale* to establish a historical connection between Ignatius and Hegel, and to explain how that maxim is a résumé of the supreme objective of the Exercises and a synthesis of Ignatian spirituality in its dialectic tension.

> *Non coerceri maximo, contineri tamen a minimo*. This double and contrary impulse constitutes the soul, continually present, of the Exercises, because the problem of my free decision—*id quod volo*—is their centre, just as it was in the most intimate of Ignatius' concerns.
>
> *Divinum est*. Ignatius is not satisfied with unfolding this divine synthesis of contraries in the immense panorama covered by the Four Weeks. Even in the smallest details, his pedagogy takes inspiration from it, always careful to balance the one with the other: our infinite impulse towards the transcendent, and our no lesser need for immanence.[24]

Before moving on to the use made of this maxim by Pope Bergoglio, we need to call to mind the Ignatian formula of Gabriel Hevenesi, which occupies the final study in *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels*:

> This is the first rule which we must obey in the works that God asks of us: to trust in God, *as if* all the success depended on you and not at all on God; and, nevertheless, dedicate yourself fully to them, *as if* you had nothing to do and God had to do it all.[25]

Concentrated in the maxim of Hevenesi is all the intensity of the very life of the Exercises in its totality. In the same way that, in the meditations and contemplations, grace and liberty embrace and compenetrate one another, so also that living circularity can be intuited, which gives life by means of an inexhaustible dynamism: 'that of God who becomes human so that the human being can become God'.[26] Therefore, the relationship between grace and liberty, between divine and human action, always presents itself in the form of an open question, an imperishable question mark called continually to become real in the relation between God and God's creature in the horizon of history. This

[24] Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*, 173, 175.

[25] Gabriel Hevenesi (1656–1715) attributed this influential saying to Ignatius in his collection *Scintillae Ignatianae* (1705). See Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*, 305–364.

[26] Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*, 340.

is the logic which permits the discernment of spirits and which is alive in the other maxim which we are about to analyze, in order to show how it is forms part of the spiritual repertory of the present Pope: *Non coerceri maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est*.

The Spiritual Lemma: Non coerceri maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est

Bergoglio has made use on several occasions and in several ways of the *Elogium sepulchrale* of St Ignatius. We have already mentioned one explanation that follows Fiorito and Fessard on the one hand in underlining that the foundation of the Jesuit lemma is christological—since Jesus Christ is 'the manifestation and the concealment of the *Deus semper maior*'—and on the other hand in imprinting on it a very precise direction, 'the task of discernment: the decisive path by which to discover, without self-deception Who is characterized by being always beyond all flesh, taking refuge precisely in the humility of this flesh: the Word of God, "thus newly incarnate" (Exx 109)'.[27]

Bergoglio provided a gloss of this lemma in a spiritual reflection (first published in 1981) which has the title, 'To Guide in the Great and in the Little'. On that occasion he translated the maxim in this way: 'Not to feel fright before the great, and nevertheless to take account even of the smallest, that belongs to God': and he began by explaining that this slogan went beyond being a rule of conduct 'to find its place as a way of feeling the things of God and from the heart of God'.[28] The Jesuit Pope investigated the mind of St Ignatius and appealed to the criterion of government that Ignatius had proposed in the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, namely, that the great principles had to be made concrete according to the different 'places, times and persons'. The reason is that the ambiguity of life can only be rescued for God by means of discernment.

The ambiguity of life can only be rescued for God by means of discernment

This maxim contains a paradoxical logic at the moment of taking a decision: we should not be frightened by the horizon of great undertakings, but neither should we hold small things in contempt. We can elaborate great plans but not pay attention to the intermediary steps needed to realise them, or we can become so embroiled in the minor details of

[27] Bergoglio, *Meditaciones para religiosos*, 35–36.
[28] Fiorito gave a similar translation: 'to feel no fright before the greatest, attentive to the least'. Bergoglio, *Meditaciones para religiosos*, 114–127, here 114.

each moment that we are incapable of transcending them to see the plan of God. For this reason, someone who leads a group should know how to evaluate 'the smallest' while not losing sight of the great horizons of the Kingdom. Such a person has to encourage apostolic growth and audacity.

The maxim appears in the text of the Exercises given (in 2006) to the bishops of Spain by the then archbishop of Buenos Aires.[29] It is interesting to place the lemma in its precise context. The general setting is the presentation of the contemplations on the life of Christ, which begins with the portico of the meditation on the Kingdom, given the logic of the *call* of the Lord which provokes our *following*. In the vision of Ignatius—a realist as regards spiritual combat—the Beatitudes indicate the way of following. To follow Christ in the invitation of the Kingdom is to follow Him in apostolic work: 'I wish and desire, and it is my deliberate decision' (Exx 98).

This desire stands in opposition to the anti-apostolic vice of *acedia*, which Bergoglio describes as 'not taking account of the "times, places and persons" in whose context is framed our pastoral action'; or at times,

> It presents itself in the elaboration of great plans without paying attention to the concrete intermediary steps which are to bring them about, or, on the contrary, becoming embroiled in the minor details of each moment, not transcending them by looking towards the plan of God.[30]

In this way, the mission of pastors in the midst of the faithful people becomes moth-eaten.

In a biographical perspective it is worth noting the reflection that Pope Francis offers in his interview with Spadaro of August 2013. This lemma comes to the surface when their dialogue concentrates on the theme of discernment and the ministry of the successor of Peter:

> I have always been impressed by the maxim with which it is usual to describe the vision of Ignatius: *Non coerceri a maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est*. I have long reflected on this phrase in so far as it refers to how to govern, how to be a superior: not to have limits for the great, but to concentrate on the small. This virtue of the great and the small is called magnanimity and it makes each of us, according to the position we occupy, keep life always on the horizon. It is to do

[29] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza*, 51 n.34.
[30] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza*, 51 n. 34.

> the small things of each day with a heart that is great and open to God and to the others. It is to give their value to the small things, set in the frame of the great horizons, those of the Kingdom of God.[31]

As we have been noticing, Bergoglio transforms the *Elogium sepulchrale* into a fundamental criterion of discernment, which is particularly useful when one has to exercise some authority: we have to be conscious that while we seek always what brings us closer to God, that is not to be identified with either the biggest or the smallest. Following the style of government of St Ignatius, one has to know how to incarnate the great principles in the circumstances of 'place, time and persons'. Francis distrusts decisions taken in an improvised way, and has shown himself convinced that changes and reforms need this time of discernment. 'Discernment in the Lord guides me in the way I govern'.[32] We find here one of the pillars of the spirituality of Pope Bergoglio, and it is an indication of his Jesuit identity.

Recapitulation: Theory and Practice in the Spiritual Exercises According to Jorge M. Bergoglio (Pope Francis)

At this point, as a sort of recapitulation, we will present the text of the Exercises that Bergoglio gave to the Spanish Bishops, *En Él solo la esperanza*. Beforehand, it is worth remembering that as a Jesuit Bergoglio was master of novices (1972–1973), provincial (1973–1979), and rector of a house of Jesuit students in San Miguel (1980–1986). These tasks imply an intense dedication and familiarity with Ignatian spirituality. But our intention, in any case, is not to give an account in minute detail of the content of his talks, but rather to establish what was the structural background. This reflects the individual style of the person giving the Exercises as he or she carries out the task assigned by St Ignatius to the person giving them: to suggest a 'way and order' by which to meditate. We take this text as a benchmark for trying to answer these questions: can one see Bergoglio's reading of the masters in his theory and practice? Can one identify here the principles of a *dialectical* reading of the *Spiritual Exercises*?

A first consideration springs from the characteristic presentation given to the Principle and Foundation which reflects, under the

[31] Spadaro, 'Entrevista. Papa Francisco', 253.
[32] Spadaro, 'Entrevista. Papa Francisco', 254.

influence of Hugo Rahner and Miguel Á. Fiorito, a decided option for a christological emphasis, reflected in the title itself, 'The Lord who is our foundation'.[33] Similarly, on another occasion Bergoglio has explained:

> At the start of the Exercises, Ignatius confronts us with this true God, God Our Lord, Jesus Christ, Witness to the Truth. And he makes us consider truths about our lives, those elementary truths which he will have us recall in the most decisive moments of the election.[34]

Bergoglio insists on this: 'The Lord, when He gives us our mission, is our foundation .... He founds us in His Church, in the holy faithful people, to the glory of the Father.' That Lord who is our foundation evokes in us 'the image of the Lord, always greater, whom St Ignatius puts before us in the Principle and Foundation'.[35] In the Exercises, Christ Our Lord is the central point of one's personal history and of the history of salvation.

From this point we can cast a glance over the table of chapters as a whole, in which the most striking feature is that, with one exception, all the titles of the principal sections indicate the same subject: 'The Lord' (a nod to Guardini?). The sequence of these, with a link to the basic themes of the Exercises, is as follows:

1. the Lord who is our foundation (Principle and Foundation);
2. the Lord who admonishes and pardons us;
3. the spirit of the world or the 'Anti-Kingdom' (meditation on sins);
4. the Lord who calls us and forms us;
5. the Lord who forms us (meditation of the Kingdom);
6. the Lord who fights for us and with us;
7. the Lord who sends us on mission (the Two Standards);
8. the Lord who reforms us (the Three Classes of Persons);
9. the Lord who anoints us (the Three Kinds of Humility);
10. the Lord, our death and resurrection;
11. the Lord who transforms us with His love (Contemplation to Attain Love).

[33] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza,* 9 nn. 6–7.
[34] Bergoglio, *Reflexiones espirituales sobre la vida apostólica*, 17.
[35] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza,* 14 n. 12, 16 n. 14.

These titles allow one to move through the basic moments of the Four Weeks of the Exercises: sin; contemplation of the public life of the Lord, starting with the meditation on the Kingdom; passion, cross and death; resurrection and the Contemplation to Attain Love. Apart from a liking for polar opposites (the Lord who admonishes and pardons us; the Anti-Kingdom and the Kingdom; the Lord who fights for and with us), the structure of the table of contents puts a special emphasis on the contemplations that are typically Ignatian: the Kingdom, the Standards, the Three Classes, and the Three Kinds of Humility. The background reason for this lies in the importance given to the *election*, as the centre of the spiritual experience of the Exercises, following in the steps of Fiorito and Fessard. Nevertheless, when we look for the deeper reason, worth considering are the remarks made by Bergoglio, the retreat-giver, towards the end, when he thinks that the decisive moment of the experience has passed:

> Once we have made our election or reform of life we go to the feet of the Lord, next to the wood of the cross, to ask him to strengthen us to carry it forward; following the old adage about the dynamic of the Exercises: *deformata reformare*, to reform what has been deformed by sin; *reformata conformare*, what is reformed, to configure it with the life of Christ; *conformata confirmare*, to strengthen what has been configured faced with the passion and the cross of the Lord; *confirmata transformare*, to transform what has been confirmed in the light of the resurrection.[36]

To be noted at once is that 'the old adage about the dynamic of the Exercises', with its four classical oppositions, is taken up and explained in *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels* of Gaston Fessard.[37] In his opinion, as we have already noted, St Ignatius' decision to abandon the traditional pattern of the three ways—purgative, illuminative and unitive—is of prime importance; instead we should adopt his personal division into the Four Weeks, which are marked out by these four movements: *deformata—reformata—conformata—confirmata*. As a consequence of this, Bergoglio, following Fessard, adopts the dialectic pattern which establishes 'two before' and 'two after' with reference to the election: the 'two before' prior to the act of liberty correspond successively to the time of the First Week—to reform what has been deformed by sin,

[36] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza,* 101 n. 73.
[37] Fessard, *La Dialectique des Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*, 40–41, 190–213.

'the Lord who admonishes and pardons us'—and of the Second Week—to configure what has been deformed with the life of Christ, 'the Lord who calls and forms us'; the 'two after', following the election, point in the double direction which is established, first, by the Third Week—to confirm what is configured by the passion and cross of the Lord, 'The Lord, our death …'—and finally by the Fourth Week—to transfigure what is confirmed in the light of the Resurrection, 'The Lord who transforms us with His love'.

To add one final remark: the four meditations—the Kingdom, the Two Standards, the Three Classes, the Three Kinds of Humility—form the structure around the contemplation of the mysteries of the life and death of the Lord. The Three Kinds of Humility meditation sums up the process followed by the exercitant up to this moment, and the third kind, in particular, summarises what has gone before and announces what is to follow after. Francis has given it the title: 'The Lord who anoints us'. One anoints what has to be brought to perfection; to be anointed is to participate in the wisdom of the cross of Christ.[38]

In this reconstruction of the theory and practice of the Spiritual Exercises according to Jorge M. Bergoglio it becomes obvious that he has been an assiduous reader of Gaston Fessard. However, to conclude it is interesting to notice that a permanent inspiration for these Exercises is the Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, of St Paul VI. It is from there that Pope Bergoglio has taken the lemma that he likes to use in his programme of ecclesial renovation: 'the sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing'.[39]

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Translated by Joseph A. Munitiz SJ

[38] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza*, 97–98, n.71.
[39] Bergoglio, *En Él solo la esperanza,* 80–81, n. 56.

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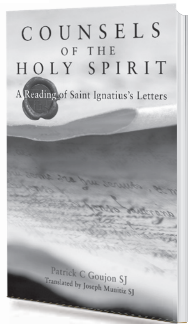

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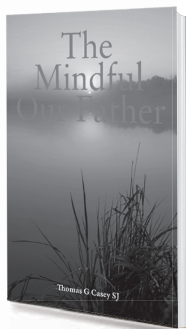

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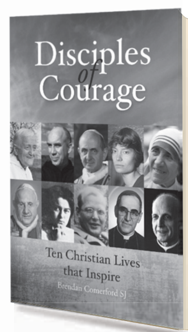

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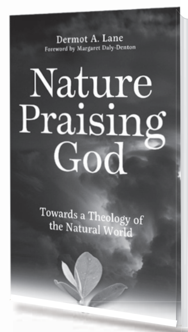

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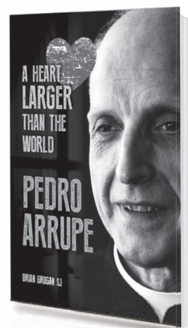

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From the Archive

THE SPIRITUAL JOURNAL OF ST IGNATIUS

Joseph A. Munitiz

THE SPIRITUAL DIARY of St Ignatius Loyola is unique among his voluminous works as being both one of the very few that survive in their original handwritten form and one that was written solely by the saint himself without the assistance of his secretary.[1] One might have expected it to provide immediate access to his mind and spirituality. Instead many readers, even those who have some acquaintance with the life and work of the saint, find that the Diary remains hidden in a strange mist of cultural remoteness and unintelligibility.

These pages are clearly the work of a man devoted to God, living an intense interior life, divinely endowed with special gifts. It is not quite so easy to believe that they were written by the man who founded the Society of Jesus, at a time when he was extraordinarily active, both in personal apostolic work in Rome and even in the more taxing occupations of the government of the young Society (the first papal approbation had been granted only five years previously). Further, although the impression conveyed by the Diary is that the writer is a man subject to more than the ordinary psychological tensions, a person tossed between 'great tranquillity' and the sort of experience recorded for 8 February 1544—'I felt within me that I approached, or was brought before, the Father, and with this my hair rose and I felt what seemed an intense warmth in every part of my body, followed by tears and the most intense devotion'—it comes as something of a surprise to find that this is

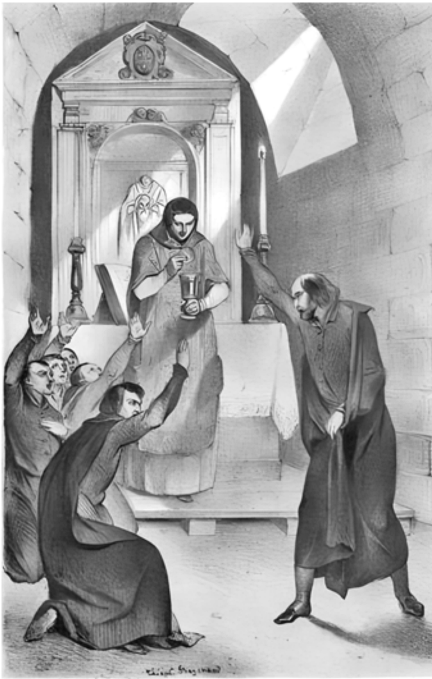
This article first appeared in *The Way Supplement*, 16 (1972): its conventions about language and gender are of its time and have not been changed. Translations from the *Autobiography* and Spiritual Diary are the author's own, and predate those in *Personal Writings*.

[1] The Diary, written in 1544–1545, was first published nearly four hundred years later by Arturo Codina in MHSJ Const 1, 86–158.

also the man whose disciples were instructed by him to excel in exterior and interior equilibrium.[2] Finally, although it may be clear from the Diary that the writer is resorting to certain techniques in the spiritual life (such as ways of praying and of making a decision), it is not clear whose techniques these are, nor indeed how far he is merely indulging in whims.

In addition, the reader of the Diary may well ask himself what type of mystical experience it represents, what evidence it affords that Ignatius enjoyed the higher flights of infused contemplation, and how typical of the saint's normal spiritual life are its pages.

The Historical Context



The Vow of Montmartre, ***by Théophile Fragonard, 1845***

Although the first group of Ignatius' companions had taken vows of poverty, chastity and pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1534, their first vows as members of the Society of Jesus could only be made after the proposed pilgrimage had definitely been impeded and, as a consequence, the group had found it necessary to form an association that would meet the canonical requirements and receive papal approbation. In 1537, they offered their services to Paul III. In 1539, the first draft of the *Constitutions* was composed (the *Formula instituti*); and this was formally approved by the Bull *Regimini militantis ecclesiae* of 1540, which canonically instituted the new order.[3] In 1541, the amplification of the Formula was

[2] 'The modesty of their countenance, the maturity of their walk, and all their movements, without giving any sign of impatience or pride', as Ignatius exhorts in the *Constitutions* (III. 1. 4 [250]). Even more explicit are the Rules of Modesty, composed by Ignatius but not included in the *Constitutions*.

[3] In the list of pros and cons used by the saint in the course of the election recorded in the Diary, there is mention of this Bull, and of the year following, in n. 14. The list was published by Arturo Codina along with the Diary, MHSJ Const 1, 78–81.

entrusted to Ignatius and Jean Codure, and at once Ignatius was elected General. The first solemn profession of vows was then celebrated on 22 April 1541.

The three years that intervened before Ignatius began his Diary were of crucial importance for the young order. They saw the rapid dispersal of nearly all Ignatius' companions: to Ireland (Paschase Broët and Alfonso Salmeron), Portugal (Martin de Santacruz and others), Germany, what is now Belgium and parts of Italy; the writing of the first set of *Constitutiones collegiorum*, and the founding of the college of Padua; the erection of the Roman college *pro catechumenis*; the start of the construction of Rome's first Jesuit professed house; and the founding of the house of St Martha for the reform of prostitutes. Active teaching, especially catechizing the young, apostolic work among the Jews of Rome (the brief *Cupientes*, on behalf of converted Jews, was granted in 1542 through Ignatius' intercession), and the instruction of new members of the Society, occupied the General's free time—a very precious commodity if we consider the vast number of letters which were required to inform the rapidly dispersing Jesuits of progress and organization.[4] In December 1542, we have St Ignatius' own testimony that he sent 250 letters, some as far afield as Goa in India, where Francis Xavier had already arrived. The Pope required his assistance in delicate negotiations with John III of Portugal. And at this time serious ill health was causing him great suffering and weakness (in May of 1542 and the early months of 1544 he entrusted the writing of his letters to secretaries).

With the opening of the year 1544 (the Diary begins in February of this year), it seems that the first great wave of activity that had been carrying Ignatius forward ever since his arrival in Rome suddenly diminished. The house of St Martha was founded in January, but then four months of extremely bad health crippled Ignatius' movements. In any case it must have been clear that a period of consolidation, and above all of intensive organization and planning, was becoming increasingly necessary. The new order was expanding rapidly in numbers and in the diverse directions of its personnel and their occupations. Attached though Ignatius was to the 'inner law of divine love' as the guiding principle for himself and his subjects, mounting pressure from his companions

[4] See Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Práctica de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio de Loyola en vida de su autor* (Bilbao and Rome: Mensajero and IHSI, 1946), 38–39; he establishes that Ignatius' influence on the scholastics during the years 1540–1542 was decisive for the spread of the Exercises.

and from the papacy, together with the evident dangers of dissipated energy, impelled him to begin the unwelcome task of composing the *Constitutions*.[5]

The problem became crucial with the need for a decision concerning poverty: Ignatius realised that the principles involved were of radical importance. First, there was the complex question of poverty itself: he was sufficiently aware of life's reality to appreciate that absolute poverty might spell the end of the new order by the normal calculus of human probability. Secondly, his own authority would be particularly tested: for the first time he would have to exercise on a grand scale the power so gladly entrusted to him and so reluctantly accepted; for this was only the exordium of the whole book of the *Constitutions*. And by a cruel twist of fate, the first point appeared to be one in which he would have to revoke a decision already approved by the early companions.[6] Only if the Diary is seen against this background can one understand the apparently excessive hesitation over such a relatively minor matter. The Diary's interest lies in the fact that it shows the first movements of a great soul struggling to enter with determination on a hazardous journey.

The Literary Genre

At this point, an explanation of the role of the Diary becomes imperative. The title given to these sheets of paper is not one chosen by the saint himself; and it is in many ways singularly misleading.[7] The famous diarists of world literature, the Pepyses, the Boswells, the Evelyns, fall into a certain category of mind and character: they are remarkable for their acute observation, their constancy, fidelity, industry. Often they are witty,

[5] As he says in the Preamble to the *Constitutions*: 'what helps most on our own part toward this end must be, more than any exterior constitution, the interior law of charity and love which the holy Spirit writes and engraves upon hearts'. See the letter, dated early in 1544, from Fr Domenech to all the Society, in which he mentions that Ignatius, among other occupations, is busy with the writing of the *Constitutions* (MHSI EI 1, 290).

[6] In the spring of 1541, after a commission (consisting of Ignatius himself and Codure) had examined the point, the first companions agreed that the sacristies of churches belonging to professed houses should be allowed to possess income. This decision will now be revoked by Ignatius as a result of his forty-day 'election'; and in the *Constitutions* he forbids the possession of such income. See *Constitutions*, VI.2.2 [555].

[7] The first part of the Diary, covering the forty-day election period from 2 February to 12 March 1544, is written on fourteen folios; the second part, covering almost a year, 13 March 1544 to 27 February 1545, occupies twelve folios.

sometimes pedestrian. One is not surprised to find that a methodical, rational trait predominates: one thinks, perhaps unjustly, of a bank-clerk's ledger. It is surprising to find a man of violent passions keeping a diary. And yet the distinctive features of the Spiritual Diary, the elements that give it life and interest, are precisely the diffuse outpourings, the breaking of the bonds of ordinary experience, and indeed of ordinary diction—the words flow regardless of sentence form, often twisted into phrases of almost unintelligible ambiguity.[8] When, eventually, the second part of the Diary is reached, the exact contrary seems to happen: the entries are clipped into telegrammatic reiterations.

If Ignatius is a diarist, then he must be one of the strangest. There is nothing in his character or circumstances which would explain at least the temporary adoption of such a literary form. Pepys is eminently autobiographical; his diary may begin with a blush and an attempt at secrecy, but very soon he is confiding himself and his doings with relative abandon to his readers. Ignatius was continually pressed by his companions to write an autobiography. He resisted strongly, but eventually submitted when the attack took advantage of his weak flank, his genuine humility. It was then that he dictated a short and incomplete account to his secretary. It is very matter-of-fact, dour and blunt, pitiless and, one cannot help feeling, rather unjust to himself. Few people have succeeded in avoiding making fools of themselves at the start of their conversions; most are only too willing to consign such vagaries to oblivion. The story of his encounter with the Moor is a classic example; and it is rewarding to consider that St Ignatius might have been executed for murder before he reached Manresa, had it not been for a mule's whim.[9]

The Diary, on the other hand, describes with a fullness and a detail rarely equalled the reception of spiritual gifts which would be the envy of many a canonized saint. What possessed Ignatius to indulge suddenly in a spate of autobiography which is belied by his other express statements? The answer is not to be found in a love for literary composition.

[8] It was once thought that the peculiarities of the saint's style were relics of his Basque infancy (see Plácido Múgica, 'Reminiscencias de la lengua vasca en el "Diario" de San Ignacio', *Révue Internationale des Études Basques* [1936], 57–61). Against this view, Sabino Sola ('En torno al castellano de S. Ignacio', *Raz6n y Fe*, 153 [1956], 243–274) has argued that all the saint's peculiarities are typical of 'pre-classical' Spanish style and are to be found, for example, in the letters of Cardinal Cisneros. For a restatement of the Basque argument see Giuseppe de Gennaro, 'La expresión literaria mística del Diario espiritual ignaciano', *Manresa*, 35/1 (1963), 25–46.
[9] See *Autobiography*, nn. 14–16.

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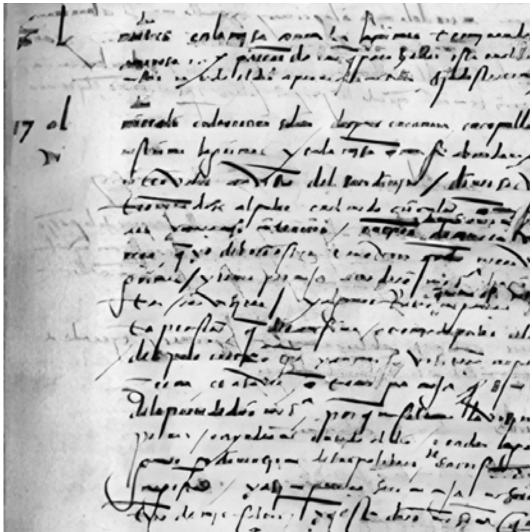

A manuscript page from Ignatius' Spiritual Diary

Ignatius can reject as wildly improbable in himself the sort of motivation that Augustine perhaps would have acknowledged as a part of the secret of his *Confessions*. The author of the Diary is not a lover of words: he treats them roughly, now sparingly, now in wanton excess; they are seized and hammered into place—rather like the saint's own handwriting.

To find the *raison d'être* of the Diary, we must turn in quite a different direction. Indeed, once the new orientation has been adopted, it will be found to lead to the solution of most of the Diary's problems. In 1522, barely one year after his being wounded at Pamplona (20 May 1521), Ignatius was living the life of a recluse at Manresa. He then began the composition of the series of 'meditation notes' which formed the nucleus of his first and best-known book, the *Spiritual Exercises*. (This received papal approbation from Paul III in 1548, at the request of Francis Borgia; in the same year the first edition, in Latin, appeared.)

The book consists of instructions as to the reformation of one's life by means of prayer and penance. Its style is didactic and eminently practical. Its originality consists in the exactness with which the affective and rational processes involved and required during the selection of, and the total dedication to, a life's reform, are anticipated and provided for. Such precision is the result of a man's acute and repeated reflection upon his own mental processes. And, for Ignatius, such reform is the mainstay of a vigorous life of the spirit.

Consequently, the lessons learnt at Manresa and imparted through the Exercises are of daily and perennial importance. This may seem exaggerated and is certainly open to misinterpretation. There are aspects of the Exercises which are necessarily transient, applicable at the most to the thirty-day period dedicated to their observance: the intensity of feeling normally produced, the emotional strain, would be unbearable

and harmful if unduly protracted. But if evidence were lacking that many of the basic principles and techniques to be found in the Exercises were intended by Ignatius to be the inner framework of a man's whole spiritual life, then the Spiritual Diary is of exceptional importance as decisive proof.

The Technique of Decision

The Spiritual Exercises revolve around the central axis of reform. At the heart of the Second Week is to be found a number of considerations that help the exercitant to reach the decisive point at which he both sees what change is required, and has the strength to accept it. From different angles, appealing to diverse mental factors, Ignatius leads the exercitant to consider the means required (in the meditation on Two Standards), the readiness needed (in the consideration of the Three Couples), and the motive underlying the heroism of the followers of Christ (the Three Modes of Humility).

The exercitant must then, in the light of these considerations, try to come to a conclusion. Many might have thought that sufficient had been done: that the exercitant could now be left to find his own way. However, Ignatius still has some important information that can be of immense help. Through the apparent jungle of possible reactions he outlines three paths which he has discovered by personal trial and error. The first is the sort of illumination which admits of no doubt; a Pauline conversion, an apostolic vocation. The second and third are much more protracted and complicated. The third, which is explained most fully, is dominated by the notion of the 'reasonable'.

Here there are at least two possibilities. First, one can draw up a list of the pros and cons that concern the matter at issue; and, after prayer and particular attention to the purity of one's motivation, one can weigh up the importance of the respective sides. Secondly, a number of considerations may help one withdraw to a certain distance from the problem, and thus study it more objectively (for example, to proceed as if making the deliberation on behalf of someone else). It is quite clear from the Diary that Ignatius, for lack of a Pauline illumination, had had recourse to this third way, in its varied forms; but he had not found in it a satisfactory solution to his problem.

Consequently he had tried the second way, which is described by the saint himself in the *Spiritual Exercises*, in words that might have been

taken from the Diary: 'The second, when one receives abundant clearness [*asaz claridad*] and knowledge, through experiencing consolations and desolations, and through experiencing the differentiation [*discreción*] of various spirits (Exx 176).[10] It becomes clear at once that the Spiritual Diary consists of sheets on which Ignatius has noted precisely these 'consolations and desolations', the day-by-day process of diverse 'spirits'. It is essentially a record intended to be maintained during a relatively short period (unlike the normal diary), and it contains references only to occurrences that fall under these headings.

Some readers may have been puzzled at the terms introduced in the description of this 'second way'. They have a technical ring about them. The treatment given by the saint to these phenomena, in notes inserted between the meditations of his Exercises, is recognised as masterly, and is strikingly original in the clarity and precision which he brings to bear upon a problem as ancient as Christian spirituality itself.[11] The occurrences involved have been felt by all possessed of spiritual awareness. The problem lies in the extreme delicacy and complexity of these happenings, and the difficulty of communicating with others on topics so remote from everyday reality.

The distinctive feature of each is the satisfaction or dissatisfaction which is felt and recognised in protracted reflection. This process of reflection requires sensitivity; but it must be backed by firmness and decision. The good and evil spirits utilise both periods (satisfaction and dissatisfaction); though the good tend to lead us to the former state. Within each state, the different spirits can still produce varied movements and agitations. One of the finest portraits in the world's spiritual writings of both these states and the actions of the different spirits is the Diary.

Satisfaction has been mentioned as the keynote of periods of consolation: but as the saint makes clear in the *Spiritual Exercises* (see, for example, Exx 316), there are different levels of satisfaction. They range from the quiet peace of increased faith, hope and charity, through internal joy and gladness which can unexpectedly flood the soul, through the tears of love and sympathy for Christ, up to the 'interior movement'

[10] See the entry in the Diary for 6 February: 'Later I realised with abundant clearness [*en asaz claridad*] ....'

[11] See the article on 'Consolation', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, volume 2 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1953).

which sets the soul ablaze with such love for God the creator that no other love can exist except as part of that conflagration.

It is interesting to find the words *moción interior* in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The Diary, too, is full of references, some very mysterious, to the 'inner life' ('internal joy', 'internal tears', and so on). When he comes to give rules concerning the remedies to be taken against desolation, Ignatius provides precisely those which are to be found used in the Diary: firmness, increased exercise of prayer and self-examination, a recognition that one may be at fault and that God may be providing a period of trial, both for increased self-knowledge and greater appreciation 'that it does not lie in our power to cause or retain great devotion, intense love, tears nor any other spiritual consolation, but that everything is gift and grace of God our Lord' (Exx 322).[12]

However, even consolations require keen self-analysis, or rather a constant sensitivity to the slightest change. We find this a preoccupation in the Diary, as explained in the Exercises:

> It is characteristic of the evil angel, who presents himself under the guise of an 'angel of light' [*sub angelo lucis*], to make his entry on the side of the soul's devotion but his exit for his own profit; that is to say, he brings good and holy thoughts that are in full accord with such a virtuous soul; but later, little by little, he tries to make off with what is his own, dragging the soul towards his concealed treachery and perverse intentions. (Exx 332)

Two interrelated passages from the Diary may be quoted; they illustrate admirably the perception of a false consolation:

> February 18: After Mass I quietened down, comparing my own worth with the wisdom and greatness of God. I continued for some hours until the thought came to me that I should not trouble to say more masses—I felt angry with the blessed Trinity; I had no desire to prolong the deliberation into the future …
>
> February 20: Later I felt strengthened in what I had done by the knowledge that the earlier spirit had been evil, the one that had wanted to make me have doubts and feel anger with the blessed Trinity ….

[12] Compare the entry for February 26: 'On beginning Mass … a very slight weeping—I thought that with less I was more satisfied and content; in that way I felt I was being ruled by His Divine Majesty, to whom it belongs to give and withdraw his graces as and when it is most convenient'.

It is ironical that Ignatius, of all people, should have been accused of rigidity in his spirituality. The words of the *Spiritual Exercises* on the differentiation of spirits (also those on the control of scruples) only begin to make sense if seen in reference to the type of inner life portrayed in the Diary. This is a life tenderly responsive to the slightest movements of grace, and completely dependent on them. Time, which most men in Ignatius' position would have considered of vital importance, becomes irrelevant as the days of quiet waiting impose themselves. The great virtue becomes that of patience.

The Framework of the Exercises

Once the Exercises have been discovered as a key to the understanding of the Diary, they continue to furnish innumerable clarifications. It is remarkable how often in these pages Ignatius seems to be thinking in terms of himself placed before the whole celestial court. This is the grandiose 'composition of place' (the prelude before meditation when the exercitant composes himself by thinking of some scene related to the topic he is about to consider) provided by the saint for two of the key meditations in the Exercises, the Couples and the Contemplation to Obtain Love. It seems to have been the way Ignatius imagined an offering or oblation to be most fittingly made. It is perhaps a relic of his knightly training in a Spanish nobleman's household.[13]

Also provided for solemn occasions in the Exercises is the technique of the 'triple colloquy', which also appears in the Diary. Instead of addressing himself immediately to God the Father, Ignatius intercedes first with our Lady, and sometimes with other saints even before he approaches her; then, with her assistance, he speaks to God the Son, in whose company he finally approaches the Creator himself. A typical example is the entry for February 18:

> A little later I wondered where I should begin, and it occurred to me that it might be with all the saints, putting my cause in their hands, so that they might pray to our Lady and her Son to be intercessors on my behalf before the blessed Trinity …. I set about repeating the past offerings … beseeching and nominating as intercessors on

[13] See Pedro Leturia, *El gentilhombre Iñigo López de Loyola* (Barcelona: Labor, 1949), and Félix González Olmedo, *Introducción a la vida de San Ignacio de Loyola* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1944), for the courtly ideals in Ignatius' development.

> my behalf the angels, the saints of the Old Law, the apostles and disciples, and all the saints … that they might plead to our Lady and her Son.

It is often a problem for him to decide how he should begin: again, evidence that these techniques of prayer were not mechanical rules of thumb, but general indications suggesting possible paths for the soul in its life of prayer and contact with God. The 'petition' prelude, which also appears at the head of each meditation in the Exercises, gains full life and vigour when it is seen in action in the Diary: a dominant note of supplication, sometimes strident in its intensity, begging for light on a specific problem, yet full of a strength which expands naturally without artificial pressure.

In the same way, many of the brief notes scattered through the *Spiritual Exercises* find full expression in the pages of the Diary. The curious Third Annotation, which recommends a different mental attitude when the 'will' is brought into play from that required when only the 'understanding' is active, is typical. Here, special reverence is required: the reason lies in the object, the holy, towards which the will is turned in all spiritual exercises. And in the Diary, whereas Ignatius is prepared to adopt a practical, businesslike attitude in his considerations of pros and cons, any turning of attention to God is accompanied by that insistent repetition of the word *devoción*.

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, great care is taken in the explanation of the various 'examinations of conscience'. There is also a perplexing readiness for the 'repetition' of exercises; no sooner has a meditation been finished than one is examining one's conduct and progress in the course of that meditation, and then repeating it! Unless the director is alive to the type of self-awareness required, and unless he has some experience of the tempo at which Ignatius was accustomed to conduct his meditations, he can easily drive an exercitant to the verge of breakdown. In the Diary, it is clear that the amount of intellectual cogitation involved in the saint's meditation is minimal: it is rare, and worthy of note, to be struck by a new idea. When an idea does come, as for example on February 11 …

> I received a new insight, *viz* that the Son first sent his apostles to preach in poverty, and later the holy Spirit … confirmed them, and thus, since both Father and Son sent the holy Spirit, all three persons approved that manner of sending ….

… the reaction is one of intense joy, and the digestion of the new thought, that *sentire ac gustare res interne* of the Second Annotation, fills many hours. As he remarks elsewhere: 'I shall settle down at the point where I have found what I want, without any anxiety about moving on, until I am satisfied' (Exx 76).

Within the *Spiritual Exercises* it is necessary to distinguish the practical—one might say 'technical'—instructions from the indications one finds of basic ideals and principles. The former, because of their complexity and originality, tend to attract more attention and require more protracted explanation. But the second group is the animating element within the body of the Exercises; and it is instructive to see how in the Diary they burst forth in full vigour. The ideas themselves are of marvellous simplicity and closely interconnected: the primary importance of the glory of God, to the fulfilment of whose will all personal inclinations and preferences must be logically, but still more affectively, subordinated:

> I realised that it was not I who should stipulate the time for finishing and expect to receive a visitation then, but that I should continue until His Divine Majesty thought fit, and chose to grant such a visitation. (2 March 1544)

This is the key idea in the Principle and Foundation, which opens the Exercises; it is also present, though with renewed meaning, in all the petitions of the last three Weeks: 'to ask grace from our Lord that I may not be deaf to his call, but ready and diligent to fulfil his most holy will' (Exx 91).

The spirituality of St Ignatius has been described as christocentric: it is not difficult to see what is meant. On 23 February, for example, he writes:

> While I prepared the altar for mass, Jesus came into my thoughts and I felt impelled to follow him, for to my mind it seemed that since he was the head of the society, he was a greater argument for complete poverty than all other human reasons.

And he continues a little later: 'It seemed to be in some way the work of the blessed Trinity that I could see or feel Jesus, and I remembered the time when the Father placed me with the Son'. He is referring to the great visitation of grace that occurred at La Storta (in late October or November of 1537) as he was making his way to Rome.

Later in his life, Ignatius seems to have described, and thought of, this experience in the words of the Diary, 'a placing with the Son by the Father': it is described thus in the autobiographical fragment dictated to Luis Gonçalves da Câmara (*Autobiography*, n.96). At the time of the revelation, however, when he described the event to his two companions Pierre Favre and Diego Laínez, he seems to have been more explicit as to the details. The vision was of Christ carrying his cross, and the Father had joined Ignatius with his Son in the labour of carrying the cross.[14] The deep impression made by this vision is comparable in intensity with very few experiences of the saint. Perhaps the trinitarian revelations of Manresa (1522) and the Diary (1544) are the only events of equal importance.

The Vision at La Storta, attributed to Giovanni Battista Lombardelli, mid sixteenth century

Beyond the Exercises

There can be no doubt that the Exercises provide the key to the initial understanding of the Diary. However, it would be a pity if preconceptions gained from the Exercises were allowed to obscure a deeper appreciation. And, indeed, the Exercises themselves must not be judged prematurely: they gain in stature when seen as the path towards the Diary. The christocentric nature of Ignatian spirituality is a case in point. Vital and essential as is the role given to the humanity of Christ throughout the final three Weeks, there are indications that in one sense the soul is to advance even further.

[14] Laínez's own account has been preserved only at second hand. However, the version is corroborated both by Pedro de Ribadeneira and by Gerónimo Nadal. See MHSI FN 1, 313, especially note 37 and 499 note 23. For a full study, see Robert Rouquette, 'Sources de la Vision de Saint Ignace de Loyola à La Storta', *Révue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* (1957), 34–61, 150–170.

The Annunciation, ***by Abraham Starre, mid eighteenth century***

There are only hints in the *Spiritual Exercises* of the devotional importance of the blessed Trinity. The first preamble to the Contemplation of the Incarnation, for example, brings to mind a printed title page: the three Persons are handling the orb of the earth at the top of the page; the scene of the Annunciation occupies the centre; in the course of the contemplation the exercitant thinks of their words and actions; and he makes a colloquy to them (see Exx 102, 106–108, 100).[15] But who would guess from this brief mention that Ignatius' Diary would be so full of devotion to the Trinity? In the *Spiritual Exercises* the Holy Spirit is hardly mentioned.[16] In the Diary some of the most striking visions are of the Third Person:

> I made a colloquy with the Holy Spirit. In preparation for saying his Mass; I experienced the same devotion and tears, and seemed to see or perceive him in a dense clarity or in the colour of burning flame in a way quite strange to me. (10 February 1544)

The portion of the *Spiritual Exercises* which opens out on to the great future horizons of Ignatius' own spirituality is the Contemplation to Attain Love. It forms one of the appendices, so to speak, which he added, along with notes on technical methods of prayer, to the Fourth Week. Here, in a few brief paragraphs, Ignatius initiates the exercitant into the new life for which the Exercises have prepared him: the great quest into the nature of God, an investigation whose object is not

[15] Ángel Suquía Goicoechea, *La santa misa en la espiritualidad de San Ignacio de Loyola* (Madrid: Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales, 1950), 193–194, has some interesting remarks on the illustrations concerning the Trinity to be found in missals of the period.

[16] There are five references in the short *Mysteria vitae Christi* (Exx 263, 273, 304, 307, 312), and one in the Rules for Thinking with the Church (Exx 365).

knowledge but deeper love. In the Diary, an endearing phrase to refer to God is 'giver of graces'; in the Contemplation, a rough intimation of the treasures these words enclose is imparted. The gift is the Giver himself, a Giver who is both present and dynamic in the gift, a Giver who is infinite in the number and variety of his gifts, to such an extent that no gift is not the Giver himself. Here, in this notion of 'giving', of 'communication', which for Ignatius is the quintessence of love, is to be found the seed, hidden and expectant, of the trinitarian revelations.

Ignatius seems to have been unusually aware of the interconnections between dogmas. This appears in his Marian devotion. Our Lady is 'part or portal' (*parte o puerla*) of grace:

> During the prayers to the Father and the Son and at his consecration, I could not but perceive or see her .... (At the consecration she showed that her own flesh was in that of her Son).
> (15 February 1544)

Nothing could be more foreign to Ignatian spirituality than the strange departmentalism that so often seems to beset Christian devotions. For him the saints are united with Mary among the 'mediators' (among whom appears in turn the sacred Humanity of Christ). The mystery of the Trinity, with its circuminsession of Persons, finds its true context here, although it defies expression:

> I had very many intuitions about the blessed Trinity, my mind being enlightened with them to such an extent that it seemed to me that with hard study I would not have known so much.
> (19 February 1544).

And later:

> During the prayers to the Father, it seemed that Jesus was presenting them, or accompanying those that I was saying, before the Father: and I felt or saw in a way that cannot be explained.
> (25 February 1544).

Later still:

> I saw the homeland of heaven, or the Lord of it, for I understood in some way the three Persons, and how within the Father were the second and third (29 February 1544).

It would be incorrect to suppose that, at the time of composing the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius was still unaware of the role of the Trinity.

Already in 1522 he had received at Manresa an illumination of the Trinity's intimate nature:

> One day when he [Ignatius] was reciting the Little Office of our Lady on the steps of that same monastery [of the Dominicans], his understanding began to rise, as if he saw the blessed Trinity represented by three organ keys, and this with so many tears and sobs that he could not control himself. (*Autobiography*, n. 28)

On the other hand, it would be equally misleading to suppose that Ignatius had passed beyond the learning stage. He says himself, with reference to the new insight he had received concerning the essence of the Trinity:

> So great an achievement did it seem to have untied this knot … that I could not stop repeating to myself, with reference to myself, 'Who are you? From where? …. What did you deserve? Why this?' (21 February 1544)

Again, in the second part of the Diary there appears a number of new phenomena, principal among them being the 'reverence and respect', which, the saint has come to feel, 'should be shown on going to mass when I had to pronounce the name of God our Lord etc.' (14 March 1544).[17] The mystery of the Trinity seems to have presented ever-new facets as the spiritual life of Ignatius progressed.

Allied to this growth, and forming an organic part of it, is the mystery of the Mass. Here, too, the Diary presents us not with an isolated strand of devotion but with a reiteration of that interpenetration of truths which was hinted at in the final point of the Contemplation to Obtain Love. In the eucharistic liturgy, the saint finds the great prayer, the period when earth and heaven are most obviously at one, the point at which the soul's access to the divine acquires its greatest facility. There is in the Diary a very personal approach to the Mass: the saint cannot tolerate distraction at that time.

There is no trace of the social theology which is required if the full wealth of the Mass is to be estimated. But it is essential to remember the purpose of the Diary. It is not a mere collection of thoughts; it is kept with a definite end in view: the recording of the consolations and desolations experienced in the course of reaching a decision about poverty.[18] For a

[17] See Manuel Ruiz Jurado, 'En torno a la gracia de acatamiento amoroso', *Manresa*, 35 (1963), 145–154.
[18] The study by Dr Suquía labours slightly from the initial supposition that the Diary is only a 'diary', 'in which the saint during thirteen months gathered the deepest impressions that he had experienced

full exposition of Ignatius' theological convictions, it is necessary to study his other writings.[19] Where the Diary is of particular importance is in the revelation it offers of the force that certain of the saint's ideals and modes of thought had acquired. Other aspects of his inner motivation are revealed elsewhere.

The Mystical Gifts

Outstanding among the personal traits that the Diary presents is a feature which is adumbrated in the *Spiritual Exercises* but which also escapes notice if not placed against the background of the Diary. In the second and third points of the Contemplation to Attain Love, attention is drawn to God's indwelling in created things, and to the fact 'that he works and toils on my behalf in all created things' (Exx 236). This attention to the presence of God is actively practised at the start of each meditation. An attitude of mind is built up which comes to maturity through the contemplation, and finds in this exercise its natural, and eventually its supernatural, complement.

It is remarkable how often in the Diary it is the ordinary events of the day which are suddenly illuminated and transfigured by the rush of grace. It is as the saint is having his midday meal that he receives the final decisive consolations, and it is in the middle of saying grace (surely the most routine of all spiritual duties) that he has a vision of God the Father:

> When I sat at table … the tempter tried, without success, to make me have doubts …. Suddenly, yet calmly—like a man who has won—I said to him, 'Get to your place!' Tears came to strengthen me and I felt quite sure about all I had decided …. When I said grace after the meal, the Being of the Father partly disclosed itself, also the Being of the blessed Trinity: I felt a spiritual impulse to devotion and tears such as I had not felt or seen all day. (12 March 1544)

When he is out walking in the streets of Rome, the supernatural world breaks in upon him with the same intensity as when he is saying Mass: 'Today, even when walking in the city, I felt great joy of heart, and on

while celebrating the holy mysteries' (*La santa misa*, 65). The Diary is much more: it is essentially an instrument forged to facilitate a particularly difficult election in accord with Ignatius' instructions in the *Spiritual Exercises*. In consequence, Suquía has difficulty in explaining the lacuna concerning the social function of the Mass.

[19] The gap is only partly filled by the pioneer work of Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, translated by Michael Barry (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968). For a study of Ignatius' letters, see Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Espiritu de San Ignacio. Perspectivas y actitudes ignacianas de espiritualidad* (Bilbao: Mensajero, 1958).

St Ignatius at prayer, by Giovanni Battista del Cairo, seventeenth century

seeing three rational creatures together, or three animals, or three other things, the blessed Trinity was brought before me' (19 February 1544).

Even in the celebration of Mass, it is not only at the culminating points, the canon or communion, that Ignatius' prayer receives its special graces, but at such times as the *Confiteor* (25 February), or the *Epistle* (17 February). The consolation of God, he notes in the *Spiritual Exercises* (Exx 330), has the characteristic that it enters the soul without previous warning, for the Creator has the right to enter and leave his house without any preliminary knocking. However, his entries in the Diary testify to the emotion this sudden onslaught of devotion can cause, leaving Ignatius gasping for breath, and hugging his chest to relieve the anguish:

> After I had gone to bed, I had special consolation in thinking of the three Persons, hugging myself for the exultation in my soul .... [The following morning] While saying mass I was not weeping, yet not entirely without tears, feeling a certain warm devotion, glowing as it were; also many little gasps full of great devotion.
> (18 February 1544)

> … during prayer I wept much, the tears streaming down my face. A very intense devotion lasted for a while, my mind enlightened or my memory quickened by the blessed Trinity. I was at peace and felt such joy that there was a pressure in my chest for the intense love I was experiencing in the blessed Trinity. (19 February 1544)[20]

Constant prayer is, of course, a special gift of God. The Diary provides first-hand evidence that Ignatius had been given this gift, at least at

[20] *Hasta apretarme en los pechos*: the interpretations vary. Iparraguirre, following Peter Knauer, favours: 'that I was hugging my breast'.

certain periods of his life. In the *Autobiography*, he says quite plainly that the special gifts of contemplative prayer were not always granted him; but in his early years at Manresa, after his studies when he moved to Venice, and during these months when he was preparing himself for the composition of the *Constitutions*, he seems to have received unusually varied spiritual consolations.

Thus, although it is likely that among the personal papers destroyed before Ignatius' death there was mention of great graces, there are two pieces of evidence to prove that the graces recorded in the Spiritual Diary were quite exceptional. The first is the document written by Ignatius himself, which appeared so mysteriously in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid.[21] Here are written out the passages underlined in the Diary: those that refer to the most extraordinary of the visions and graces. The saint would not have gone to such trouble if he were constantly receiving graces of this kind. Secondly, there is a passage in the *Autobiography*, dictated eleven years later, which gives the Diary a special importance:

> He [Ignatius] then showed me [Gonçalves da Câmara] quite a large bundle of written notes and read me a good part of them. For the most part they were visions he had seen in confirmation of some parts of the *Constitutions*: he had sometimes seen God the Father, at other times the three Persons of the Trinity, at others our Lady interceding or approving.
>
> He spoke to me in particular of the deliberation in which he had been stuck for forty days, saying Mass each day, and with many tears each day: the point at issue was if the Church should have an income, and if the Society could avail itself of such.
>
> The method he used while composing the *Constitutions* was to celebrate Mass each day, to present to God the point he was treating, and to make his prayer about it; during both his prayers and his Mass he would shed tears. I wanted to see all those notes referring to the *Constitutions*, and I asked him to let me have them for a short while; but he did not want to. (nn. 100–101)[22]

Ignatius probably continued to preserve the Diary precisely because of the exceptional nature of its entries; they recorded an apex of his spiritual life.

[21] See MHSJ Const 1, ccxli–ccxlii.

[22] The original is in Italian, as this part of the *Autobiography* was not written down by Gonçalves da Câmara himself, but dictated later from memory to an Italian secretary.

However if, in the first part of the Diary, the number of visions, particularly of the Trinity, the references to physical heat and other strange sensations are remarkable, it is in the second part that the more unusual of the special mystical phenomena make their appearance: the *loqūela* and its *música*.

> The internal *loqūela* of the Mass seemed even more a special gift from God; I had prayed for it this very day because during the week I had sometimes experienced the external *loqūela* and sometimes not, but the internal more rarely, although last Saturday I heard it a little more clearly .... During the internal and external *loqūela* I felt wholly moved to the divine love and to this gift of *loqūela* granted by God; within me a great harmony accompanying the internal *loqūela*, but I cannot express it. (11 May 1544)
>
> I took great pleasure in the internal *loqūela*; at the same time I found myself enjoying or remembering the *loqūela* or music of heaven [*música celeste*] (12 May 1544).
>
> A little later I thought I was taking excessive pleasure in the tone of the *loqūela*, that is in the mere sound, without paying sufficient attention to the meaning of the words and of the *loqūela*. (22 May 1544).

Also it is in the second part that the references to weeping become so constant that they submerge all other entries. Commenting on the role of tears in the Diary of Ignatius, Fr de Guibert wrote:

> Although the Catholic tradition has always had a high esteem for tears of compunction, and even more so for tears as a mystical gift, there is no saint, as far as I am aware, for whom in practice they have had such importance.[23]

Clearly, during the period covered by the Diary, Ignatius was receiving exceptional gifts of grace and of prayer; and these notes provide first-hand evidence that he is to be included among the mystics of the Church.

Conclusion

With regard to the external phenomena which accompanied the intense spiritual activity of this period of his life, it is interesting to note that

[23] Joseph de Guibert, *St Ignace mystique d'après son 'Journal spirituel'* (Toulouse: Apostolat de Prière, 1950), 56: this little book, the first profound study of the Diary, consists of articles first published in 1938 in *Révue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*. They are still well worth consulting.

Walter Hilton, probably the most competent theologically of the 'English Mystics' of the fourteenth century, indirectly alluding to the *dulcor*, *canor* and *calor* of Richard Rolle (phenomena which seem to have so much in common with Ignatius' tears, *loqūela* and *música*), points out that such experiences bear little relationship to the depths of God's love in a soul:

> Well I wot that these manner feelings and fervours of devotion … are gracious gifts of God sent into chosen souls, for to draw them out of worldly love … nevertheless, that the fervour is so much in outward showing is not only for greatness of love that they have, but it is for littleness and weakness of their souls, that may not bear a little touching of God.[24]

Ignatius would have agreed. In his defence we may think it more just, rather than speak of 'littleness and weakness of soul', to bear in mind the 'occupational hazards' of a busy active life. Ignatius felt the latter to be his vocation and was prepared to sacrifice mystic gifts and graces that are physically possible only for a contemplative. His position is that of so many of his disciples: the confessor, the spiritual guide, the director of the Spiritual Exercises. Perhaps among the hundreds of diary entries in which tears are recorded, the most revealing for our appreciation of the inner fabric of Ignatius' spirit is the short entry for 3 April: 'I had no tears before, during or after Mass; at the end I felt more content without them and felt great affection, judging that God our Lord did this for my greater good'.

Joseph A. Munitiz SJ was a Byzantine scholar and editor of Greek texts, who published translations of writings by St Ignatius as well as the *Memoriale* of Gonçalves da Câmara and other works. He had a long and fruitful association with *The Way*, and died in July 2022.

[24] Quoted in David Knowles, *The English Mystical Tradition* (London: Harper, 1961), 109.

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Away in the loveable west,
On a pastoral forehead of Wales,
I was under a roof here, I was at rest

Gerard Manley Hopkins, Jesuit poet

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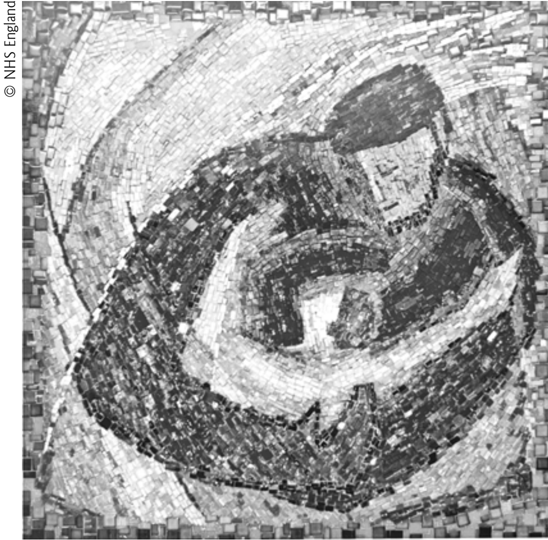
SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE 'PRODIGAL SON'

With a Little Help from a Byzantine Commentary

Barbara Crostini

LUKE'S MOST FAMOUS PERICOPE (15:11–32) is known by its catchy caption as the parable of the Prodigal Son. I am not sure when it acquired this title in the history of reception. The word 'prodigal', so uncommon in any modern language, is sometimes replaced by 'lost', linking this story with the other two 'lost' parables of Luke 15 (the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin). But 'prodigal' at least makes one curious to know what had happened to this son, whereas 'lost' may well convey the idea that he has no GPS signal. Particularly in this story, translations and clarifications of Luke's Greek risk making the text increasingly alien from the original nuances and range of meanings. Since Joe Munitiz loved the precision of the Greek language, I offer these reflections on the famous parable in his memory, because with his life he has mirrored the Father's unbounded mercy, and with his death he will be enjoying His eternal banquet.

Since titles tell us about content and raise a reader's (or listener's) expectations, it is important to underline that this rubric is a later addition. Saint Augustine referred to the parable as the story 'of the two sons', and this tradition held in Latin commentaries inspired by him. Removing the spotlight from the 'bad' son has large repercussions for the understanding of the story, even in its likely pre-Lucan incarnation as a folk tale. For redaction critical purposes, it avoids the impression that the third and final part of the action, when the 'good' son takes centre stage, is a kind of removable appendix. The 'other' son is there from the beginning of the story. At the opening of the pericope, v. 11 roundly declares, 'A man had two sons'. Moreover, twice in the Greek, the plural case of the pronoun is used in v. 12, as a genitive partitive and as an ethical dative, both standing in place of a dual to reinforce the father's status as the father of two.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The Prodigal Son*, by Hilsdegart Nicholas, 1991*

The bifurcation of the story is evidently lost when we displace the 'good' son to a secondary, marginal role.

Besides taking away the integral role of the elder son in the story—and message—of the parable, the current rubric also reduces the spotlight on the father himself. In fact, visual representations of the parable often condense this story in the father–son embrace, like the mosaic by Hilsdegart Nicholas at Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals, St Luke Chapel (1991). In these images, although the second son does not appear, it is the father's love that is prominently represented, the encompassing embrace where a son who accepts that love can find rest, peace and joy. This kind of take-away from the story is certainly possible and central, yet it too is undermined by the current rubric about the 'prodigal son', which reflects our curiosity about the fate of sinners and our readiness to boil down religion to moral choices. This parable, however, like many stories of the saints, wants to question and undermine any easy bipartition between the good and the evil. Taking away from it the essential bifurcation, made concrete by the two sons, and replacing it with the protagonism of one cannot but distort its impact and prejudge its effects.

The father had two sons, not just one. The parable is presenting the attitudes and reactions of both sons and dwelling on the paradox of our expectations. Expectations are a form of causality. And if causal links help us explain reality and predict outcomes, the father's behaviour is the undoing of the worldly rhythms in which these expectations operate as conventions that damn rather than redeem. Because, of course, the whole discourse of the exemplary tale is one about redemption.

That odd word, 'prodigal', is, in Greek, an adverb, ἀσώτως (*asotos*), meaning literally 'without salvation' (alpha privative + the verb *sozo*, to save). The younger son was 'living without salvation', yet he was free

to make the choice that entailed severing the ties to his father and taking responsibility for his own fortune and fate. We don't know what the father thought at the son's departure, but we do know that he remained on the lookout for his return. Like all fathers (and mothers, because this is the behaviour of a father–mother), he was anxious that his son should survive.

Keeping the two sons means looking at the bipartition of their life choices from the beginning: one goes, the other stays. For the departing brother, failure is inbuilt in the life he chooses, where money is spent without a criterion for long-term prospects and flourishing. This is one of the connotations of *asotos*. A twelfth-century Byzantine commentator, Euthymios Zigabenos, gives three explanations for this word, all beginning with the alpha privative: ἀφειδῶς (*afeidos*), ἀκρατῶς (*akratos*), ἀκολάστως (*akolastos*).[1] These additional adverbs bring out further implications of the chosen path of life: one lacking in regard for measure, lacking self-possession and lacking punishment. The son decides to live a profligate, uncontrolled and unpunished life. This choice is easily made for a well-to-do young offshoot The comfort of the father's home is easily perceived as oppressive by young people.

But the language in which the Greek sets out the departure is not just legalistic (and thus realistic). It is also slightly puzzling. The goods of the father are called οὐσία (*ousia*), *substance*, and although the required meaning is concrete, 'assets', the existential reverberations of the word cannot be escaped. Equally, the word βίος recurs to designate 'means of livelihood', but inexorably points to the fact that the discourse at stake is a choice between life and death.

In this respect, the bifurcation of the parable picks up the normal Jewish way of envisaging the teaching on salvation, as crystallized in the second-century catechism, the *Didache*. There, the choice between the 'Way of Life' and the 'Way of Death' is clear.[2] Each is described with a series of actions and implications for these actions. The parable does not question this fundamental scheme. It is a pattern taken for granted, yet not enforced. The ultimate goal of the story is to upset the easy application of this moral grid to humans' messy way of making decisions and handling life choices.

[1] Euthymios Zigabenos, *Commentaria in quattuor evangelia*, 1.34, in *Patrologia Graeca*, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne, volume 129 (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1864), col. 1024.

[2] See *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary*, edited and translated by Aaron Milavec (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2003), 1:1.

Lack of food owing to a general famine is the occasion that forces the younger son to re-evaluate his choices. He finds himself last among all the people on earth, having lost any privileges and lacking even basic sustenance. The juxtaposition in the Greek of words for perishing and resurrecting starkly paints a picture of death and life again. These verbal pointers are not just metaphorical, but reflect the distinction that, on a personal level, is facing the individual as an either–or choice. The word *koilias* (v. 16), designating the son's empty belly, is considered too vulgar by some commentators, who prefer the higher-register variant reading with a verb (*chortasthenai*, to feed). But the choice of the vulgar word 'belly' produces a hint of the Jonah story, where it designates the sea-monster's belly, filled with a human being as nourishment. Jonah is eventually spewed out towards salvation and resurrection. The symbolic power of Jonah's story fits remarkably well with how I interpret the 'Prodigal Son' narrative's intention.

Euthymios Zigabenos tells us that the person with whom the prodigal son formed a relationship (*ekollethe*, v.15) must be understood as the devil: 'he served the man-hating demon'. This identification is useful not so much as a revelation of the otherwise obscure 'citizen of that country', but because it seals his descent into sin and anarchy in the desperate attempt to survive harsh conditions. The verb *kolleomai*, to join with, has been translated as 'he hired himself out', and the pigs have been understood as a pointer to uncleanness with respect to Jewish purity laws. But neither the practical translation (forcing a 'required' meaning out of the Greek) nor a reference to purity laws seem here uppermost. The two instances where the same verb, *kolleomai*, is used in Acts (5: 13, 'none of the rest dared *to join* them'; and 10: 28, '*to associate* with … a Gentile') prove that much. Joining a group entailed adherence to their ways despite people's opinion. In 10:28, Luke makes sure that purity issues are not taken as the essence of what Christian concerns should be about: a Christian 'should not call anyone profane or unclean'.

The humiliation of hunger and a pig-like lifestyle result in the younger son's conversion. Having lost his pleasant external existence, he 'came to himself'. His introspection produces a voice that bursts out in the first direct speech of the narrative. Although it is a monologue, we can hear it being spoken aloud in the solitude of the animal pen. Its truth-value is confirmed by his ensuing departure and in his repetition of the same words as direct speech to his father. The son's resurrection is complete with his acts of courage and humility. His appreciation for

the ordinary security of his father's home, which had once seemed so boring and inadequate to his ambitions, has returned. Again, the verb *anastas* in Greek, to get up, repeated at the beginning of vv. 18 and 20, connects this episode directly to the *anastasis* (resurrection) in ways impossible to convey in translation.

The journeying metaphor and the physical distance emphasized several times in the narrative may make the 'lost son' (with no GPS) relevant after all to an understanding of the parable. The father's expectant stance, on the lookout at the threshold of his home, conveys that sense of the pathos of departures and arrivals that we have all experienced in ordinary journeys. The encounter is physical, close, expressive and action-packed. And it is wordless, all emotion carried by the visceral verb *esplanchnisth*, 'he had compassion'—literally a gut feeling—through which the father becomes the Son, Christ, who takes compassion on human distress. The word is used, for example, when Jesus is moved to perform a miracle for the widow of Nain who had lost her son (Luke 7: 13). The father has nothing to ask, no account to fill in. The son's humble words are gently rebutted by his forthright orders to the servants. There is no question to him: once a son, always a son. François Bovon speaks of a complete reintegration into the family symbolized by the robe, shoes and signet ring.[3]

The father becomes the Son, Christ, who takes compassion on human distress

Euthymios Zigabenos can help us see something, too, in the fatted calf that is being sacrificed for the son. He comments on his offering in typically allegorical manner: 'The fatted calf is the holy body of Christ. It is a calf, because Christ has never had to bear the yoke of sin; it is fatted, because he is full of virtue and because it is well prepared for being offered up for sinners'.[4] The sacrificial animal acquires another relevance in this interpretation. It helps us see the other brother's indignation in a different light, since he picks on this fact as indicative of the father's disproportionate love and unjust behaviour. If we side ourselves with the good because we have chosen the path of salvation—remaining in the father's house and keeping his commandments—we can only accuse those for whom Christ has been sacrificed and we cannot begin to enter the Father's home, however much we think ourselves already there. As

[3] François Bovon, *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9: 51–19: 27*, translated by Donald S. Deer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 428.

[4] Zigabenos, *Commentaria in quattuor evangelia*, 2.1–6, *Patrologia Graeca*, volume 129, col. 1029.

Zigabenos comments, it is not possible not to rejoice at the salvation of our brothers.[5]

It is interesting that behind the Greek words designating the younger and older brother are two Church-related expressions. The younger is a *neoteros*, another word for a new convert; the older brother is a *presbyteros*, an elder. The implications of openness to error versus greater maturity and wisdom are therefore also inbuilt in the characterization of the two brothers through the double meanings of the Greek words.

The picture that emerges from the parable of the two sons presents community life as the common wish for everyone's salvation rather than as the glorified pride of one's own special choices. The other-worldly mentality which it seeks to inculcate is both profoundly human and profoundly alien to the human reasoning that would wish to box life into the fixed parameters of causality and expectations. Everything in the parable is unexpected: the departure, the famine, the return, the ungenerous reaction of a brother. If we get stuck in this mentality, there is no chance that we will be able to celebrate and rejoice. And yet, it is a duty to do so, as the father says. Banquets with food, music and dancing sound so alien to the religious solemnities of silent churches. To see how the two belong together is one of the challenges of this parable.

Joe Munitiz's last published article in *The Way* was about the conversion of Ignatius. This parable is also about conversion. In a world that encourages independence, breaking with tradition and proud displays, and in which glittering temptations abound and multiply, conversion as the return to safety could be easily misunderstood as compromise or lack of ambition. The humility necessary for it is perhaps at the core of the 'prodigal' son's speech. It is a trait that recurs in memories about Joe, and a value that is as deeply human as many other more conspicuous ones.

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[5] Zigabenos, *Commentaria in quattuor evangelia*, 2.17–20, *Patrologia Graeca*, volume 129, col. 1032.

A DISSERTATION, A SPIRITUAL DIARY AND DEVOTION

On Spirituality and Academic Research

Christopher Staab

IN HIS REFLECTIONS on the Jesuit commitment to studies, one of the great US Jesuit scholars of the twentieth century, Michael Buckley, wrote: 'you become what you know and what you love. Your thoughts and your affections spell out the constitution of your life.'[1] When we study, we become the texts that we love, and our affections, shaped and coloured by those texts, indeed spell out who we are or who we have become in our study.

During the past three years, I have researched and written a doctoral dissertation on Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Diary, under the title 'An Abundance of Devotion'.[2] This phrase comes from the very opening of the Diary where Ignatius, examining his prayer on 2 February 1544, writes of just such an experience: an 'abundance of devotion'. The phrase turns out to be something of an overture to the first part of his diary. In brief, the first section of the document, covering an intense forty-day period of searching for God's will on a question related to the vow of poverty, reports multiple and varied experiences of devotion. As such, the opening lines of the text, as if it were part of a highly stylised and sophisticated narrative, prepare the reader for what will come.

For many readers and specialists in the field of Ignatian spirituality, connecting Ignatius with devotion may come as something of a surprise. He is known as the 'contemplative in action' or as the founder of a 'spirituality of consolation'.[3] Such approximations are not incorrect, but

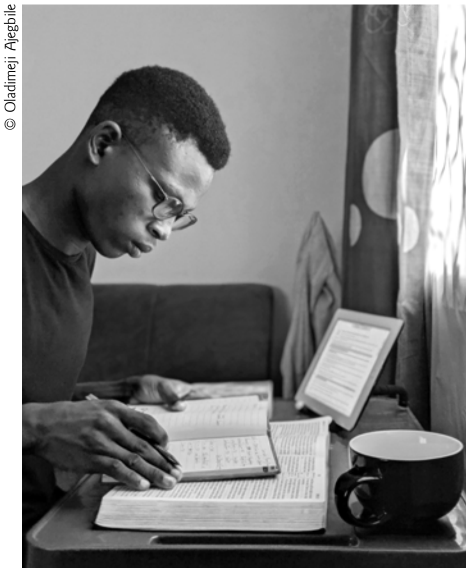
I would like to thank Samuel Prevara and Jared Wicks for kind and helpful observations on previous drafts of this essay.

[1] Michael Buckley, 'Jesuit Priesthood: Its Meaning and Commitments', *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 8/5 (1976), 156.
[2] Christopher Sraab, '"An Abundance of Devotion" (*De* 1). A Study of Devotion in the *Spiritual Diary* of Ignatius of Loyola' (PhD thesis, Universidad Pontificia Comillas, Madrid).
[3] Brian O'Leary, "Consoler and Consolation", *The Way Supplement*, 99 (2000), 61–69, here 67.

neither formulation attends to the language of his most personal writing in which a pre-eminent place is given to devotion. Surprises are good for readers, however, and they give life and vitality to academic fields. In addition, devotion, or any spiritual experience for that matter, does not remain circumscribed as an academic topic.

As I neared the conclusion of my research on this intimate journal of Ignatius' prayer, I was drawn to go through a process akin to that which characterizes the Diary itself. Ignatius, day after day, examined his prayer and recorded what he felt. He took time reflect on all that occurred inside him, whether thoughts or bodily sensations, during his various periods of prayer and the eucharist. His written examination comprises the Spiritual Diary. He was not trying to construct a narrative; rather he was attempting to find the signs that emerged with enough clarity and consistency to point him in the direction of God's will. His Diary documents the beautiful process of trying to feel and to know God's language so that he could ultimately act.

A similar kind of examination belongs to academic work, especially when it studies spiritual experience. All of us who write about and study others' spirituality need time to consider what the experience did to us, what we felt and what changed us during the research process. The study of spirituality, as Sandra Schneiders has so perceptively pointed out, consists of three moments: descriptive, analytical and constructive.[4] With this last adjective, Schneiders suggests that studying spirituality transforms the subject.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Thus, to write a dissertation on the Spiritual Diary is not simply to describe or analyze a document from 1544–1545; it is

[4] See Sandra M. Schneiders, 'The Study of Christian Spirituality: Contours and Dynamics of a Discipline', in *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*, edited by Elizabeth A. Dreyer and Mark S. Burrows (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2005), 5–24; and the wonderful set of essays in *Exploring Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honor of Sandra M. Schneiders*, edited by Bruce Lescher and Elizabeth Liebert (New York: Paulist, 2006).

to be transformed by it. In these pages, I would like to glimpse, not my own work on the Diary, but the work of Ignatius' text on me. This is more than a felicitous turn of phrase. Texts work on their readers, and spiritual texts take that work to the level of transformation. This is the issue, I believe, that all scholars, especially Jesuits, in the field of spirituality are invited to realise: to uncover that other dissertation, the contours and the shape of which indicates some kind of transformation in us. In his Diary, Ignatius found a way to spell out a part of the *Constitutions*. Something of that same process obtains in the study of his diary: it writes a way of proceeding in the subject that pores over it. I shall attempt to formulate here how the Diary spells out new ways of thinking about study and research as parts of life in the Spirit.

Where Is This Going?

One of the fascinating, if not discomfiting, aspects of the Diary for readers is that it is a difficult text to understand. This is putting it mildly. More baldly, its movement is difficult to follow. There is something like a beginning, middle and end, but it is difficult to trace the arc of discernment in it.

In addition, it is startling to discover Ignatius making so few references to aspects of his life outside his prayer. Mention is made, for example, of a Mass with a cardinal and of walking on the street—hardly the most revealing details for a man in his 53rd year living in Rome as the superior of a newly approved religious order—but these references are so few as to be largely insignificant. There is, however, the repeated allusion made to noise. Yes, noise! Ignatius seems to have been easily perturbed by the sounds made by his companions. This is not surprising as the text represents his examination of his prayer, and as such he comments on his irritation when he hears his companions running down the steps or whistling. Nonetheless, his diary remains unusual; and, as one reads it, its strangeness grows: the last nine months consist of an algebraic and codified registering of his tears before, during or after Mass.

Though scholars have attempted to point out discreet narrative lines or map concentric circles that characterize it, Ignatius is not trying to pull together his experiences in a narrative. Rather, he is content telegraphically to jot down what he felt, listing experiences of tears, devotion, warmth, grace and other reactions felt in prayer. Furthermore,

Ignatius qualifies each experience. For example, devotion is never simply 'devotion', but he registers it as 'intense', 'the most intense', 'new' or sometimes 'notable'. For a reader some five centuries later, these lists, with their always qualified descriptions, seem like rather indiscriminate compilations of experiences. They do not appear to have an order and the relation of one spiritual gift to another is generally not made explicit. Glimpses do emerge of Ignatius' process, but a reader is not wrong to ask as he or she reads it: where is this all going?

That question is germane as it approximates the researcher to the writer. In other words, it is likely that Ignatius asked a similar question during his period of discernment. Such a supposition is a safe one: he embarked upon a process to find God's will and he did not know at the outset how long this would take or what the end result would look like. Sometimes it seems that the question of where the process was going was a peaceful one, as he appears to have felt God pulling him along in his journey to find out what the Society might do with regard to the question of poverty. At other times, that question of where his process was taking him seems to have provoked in him no small amount of anxiety. As an example, there is the moment when he became indignant with the Trinity. He thought he had arrived at the answer to his question and that the confirmation of it was imminent. Much to his surprise, he did not receive the confirmation that he so hoped for and this (naturally) frustrated him. In brief, it was not always easy for Ignatius to live with the question of where it was all going.

This question, in relation to a discernment process, is not unrelated to the academic process of reflection, analysis and writing. In a way not dissimilar to Ignatius, I too wrote while wondering where the process was going. Sometimes chapters were clear; but with others, the narrative line before me was more difficult to see. I often asked myself: is this idea moving the argument forward or am I writing in circles? I remember vividly the difficulty that I experienced with Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* and its relationship to Ignatius' prayer. I still wonder if my analysis of that famous Modern Devotion text actually helps the reader understand Ignatius any better.

The dissertation aimed to have a clear response to the question of where it was going. Or, in the language of Sandra Schneiders, my work aimed to describe and analyze the movement of the Diary. I wanted to show the reader how to read the text and what devotion meant in it. But even now, with the project complete, curiously the question of

where this is all going lingers. And this question tells upon that which is transformative in the Diary. I would venture that the prolonged period of study of this text has allowed me to ask that question with greater finesse, freedom and curiosity. It is a question that one learns how to ask with a certain openness. It is no longer as disquieting as it was before.

Rather, as both the Diary and my own experience disclose, the answer emerges with time. Adhering more closely to the Diary, it is attention to the signs that emerge each day which allowed Ignatius to discover God's will: time and attention. In another context, the poet Mary Oliver has written that 'attention is the beginning of devotion'.[5] Ignatius' attention allowed devotion to guide him forward. The question of where this is going sends us back to the place of attention, and from attention we can glimpse God's immense communication with us. This is the transformative work of the Diary on its readers: the patient process evidenced in its pages and the care taken with its language can create in us that same disposition to be attentive to the Spirit whose language is dynamic and goes where it wills. To ask oneself where this is all going is not to be plagued by doubt, nor need it generate self-centred anxiety. Paradoxically, the question does not point us to the future, but anchors us through attention in the present and to the One who is spelling out a new way for us to live.

What Is the Right Word?

As a notebook that Ignatius was using to discern God's will, the Diary would seem to make a simple claim about an aspect of his spirituality: writing helped him understand what he experienced in prayer. Each day he spent time detailing his thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations, with the hope that over time they would reveal to him God's will. A closer look at other texts of his and documents about him suggests that he turned to writing in manifold ways throughout his life. This is a remarkable aspect of Ignatius' life: he wrote in many genres—letters, a retreat manual, a legislative text, a personal diary, a now lost treatise on the Trinity—all his life. His prose may not have the flair of Theresa of Ávila's, but not for that reason need he be discounted as a writer. The *Autobiography* makes a simple and often overlooked claim about

[5] Mary Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin, 2016), 8.

his convalescence and conversion in Loyola: he spent time writing and praying (n.11): not just writing to understand his prayer but writing as a spiritual exercise.

The Diary reveals many aspects of Ignatius as a writer. A cursory view of the manuscript demonstrates that he was very fastidious about finding the right word. The deletions, additions and range of editorial marks throughout the two notebooks do suggest that he would have agreed with Mark Twain that 'the difference between the almost right word and the right word is … the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning'.[6] Ignatius intuited that difference, and he sought the lightning.

The temptation for readers is to imagine that Ignatius' search for the word merely involves the quest to describe as precisely as he can the experience felt. In other words, the deletions and additions to the Diary show us his penchant for precision, and they remind us of the difficulty inherent in describing an experience of the Spirit. But writers and scholars in the field of spirituality know that the issue runs deeper.

On the one hand, and at a more obvious level, locating and discovering the correct expression is about thinking. This is to say that thought and finding the right word to express it are not two acts, but one. In the words of Michael Buckley, 'our contact with the real and with value is through language. We think in words.'[7] The words in the Diary that Ignatius pored over during his examination show him continually thinking about his experience with God. And his thinking ran deep, so much so that in the estimation of Roland Barthes, Ignatius was 'a founder of a language'.[8] All who study in the field of Ignatian spirituality would agree; we need look no further than publications that carry the words 'dictionary' and 'vocabulary' as evidence that he founded a language.[9]

On a more spiritual plane, the pilgrim Ignatius in search of the right word does not only personify the rigour of his own thinking about his prayer. His attention in his diary to words reminds us that the

[6] Mark Twain, 'The Art of Composition', in *Life as I Find It: A Treasury of Mark Twain Rarities* (New York: Cooper Square, 2000), 228. Elsewhere Twain credits his friend Josh Billings with the remark.

[7] Michael Buckley, 'Mission and Companionship: Of Jesuit Community and Communion', *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 11/4 (1979), 10.

[8] Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), 6.

[9] To give two examples, I refer to the *Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana*, 2 volumes, 2nd edn (Bilbao and Santander: Mensajero and Sal Terrae, 2007), as well to Ignacio Iparraguirre's *Vocabulario de Ejercicios Espirituales* (Rome: CIS, 1972).

spiritual experience takes place in language. As Juan Martín Velasco has argued, language 'is part of the original moment of the experience' of God.[10] This is to say that the language that Ignatius 'uses' is not posterior to the experience; it is that which allows the very experience to be available to him. The symbolic structure of the word—be it devotion, consolation, warmth—is that in which he becomes conscious of the non-objective presence of God in his life. Far from the search for *le mot juste*, the textual edits remind us that the search for the word is about becoming aware of God, whose presence to us is mediated through symbolic structures. The precise word is nothing less than the lightning of divine presence.

The question of the right word is one that always concerns writers and scholars. The noun, the adjective and the verb are the place where the writer labours, and labours hard. Scholars know that it is at the level of the word that their academic exegesis is most at stake. We may not be founders of language like Ignatius, but dissertations, articles and recensions are creations precisely because of the words that are used. In the context of studying spiritual texts, especially one such as the Diary that calls attention to the language used, the transformation that the spiritual text effects upon its reader happens at this level. It is at the level of the word that we become conscious of that other work that the Spirit is realising in us as we describe and analyze. The word studied and pored over founds the writer anew. More concretely, to write about devotion is to be changed by devotion; it is to be formed by the word. As Buckley affirmed, it is to grow in affection for it.

To write about devotion is to be changed by devotion

In his letter to Timothy, Paul cited an ancient hymn that began with this evocative phrase: 'the mystery of our devotion is very deep indeed' (1 Timothy 3:16; NJB). Slightly paraphrasing this ancient christological kerygmatic statement, the mystery of the language that we study runs deep; it is more than finding the right word or examining an interesting topic. In the words that we use and that we study, we are offered an encounter with the one who forms us in that word. This is why the care for the language is crucial for us: we are an unusual kind of pilgrim, in search of the right word, not only for the clarity of the argument, but because God meets us in symbols.

[10] Juan Martín Velasco, *El fenómeno místico* (Madrid: Trotta, 2009), 59.

Is Devotion Relevant for Us Today?

As I studied devotion in the Spiritual Diary, I was concerned with discovering what it meant for Ignatius. In a word, I believe that it meant everything. It was the spiritual gift from God whose manifestation in his interior most helped him move forward in his election process and ascertain God's will on the issue of poverty. In my reading of his notes, devotion was the spiritual experience to which he turned most frequently to verify or authenticate thoughts and ideas as coming from God. If devotion was intense or very intense, as during his election, he would know that he was on track to find God's will. Conversely, if it diminished, as it did while waiting for confirmation, he knew to back off and wait. My venturesome hypothesis is that devotion—and not consolation—was the hermeneutical axis that allowed him to interpret or know what he felt as coming from God. His familiarity with it ran deep, and as his Portuguese Jesuit biographer, Luis Gonçalves da Câmara, observed at the end of his narrative, 'he had always grown in it' (*Autobiography*, n.99).

It is easy to deduce Ignatius' devotion to Mary, the saints or the eucharist, but it is quite different to suggest that devotion was the internal sign that most guided him to God and God's will. Unquestionably, as readers of his Diary will point out, tears played a significant role in his relationship with God. However, a closer inspection of his prayer notes reveals that he actually submitted his attachment to tears to a discernment, and the sign that consistently appeared in that smaller discernment was, again, devotion. The spiritual experience of devotion was, at least during the forty-day discernment documented in the Spiritual Diary, exceedingly important to him.

Notwithstanding the import of devotion for Ignatius in 1544, I have wondered about its relevance for believers today. 'Devotion' is a word whose meaning seems to demand a kind of voluntaristic piety in

which one does pious things for God. Nested inside the word is a personal story that accompanied my study but never found its way on to the pages of my dissertation. Family legend has it that my grandmother often visited the cathedral in our city on her way home from work to light a candle for one of her eight children. She was a devout Catholic, and my grandfather, quick to tease her about her devotional practices, is said to have wryly asked her: *Are you bargaining with God again, Helen?* For many of us, devotion conjures up that idea of a bargain, a kind of *quid pro quo* with God. In such a context as ours, devotion's relevance does seem slight. Though Jesuits fondly quote the passage from the *Autobiography* that says how Ignatius was always growing in devotion, devotion nevertheless seems outmoded, as if the life of the Society of Jesus has outgrown it. Can one wrest from irrelevance a beautiful spiritual term whose initial roots report back to the sacrifice of one's life for others?

I do not have an answer to that question nor to the question of devotion's relevance for believers today. For, as much as I have argued that the word takes us to one of the more ancient expressions by which the person understood his or her relationship to God, we are in a different time. Our hermeneutical horizon is different from Ignatius', and our discernment or retreat notebooks consist of different kinds of observations. Yet this question is the one in which I conclude my study, and I believe it needs to be asked, with all of the ambiguity, doubt and risk that it entails. I wrote my dissertation it thinking of the Catholics I see in the pews each Sunday, novices who seek to understand Jesuit spirituality and laypeople to whom I have given the Exercises. I have always thought that what I called 'an abundance of devotion' was for them. But does it speak to them?

Perhaps too this question—and the capacity to leave it unanswered—discloses the transformation that the Diary has effected in me and seeks to effect in all of its readers, because it, too, ends with a sense of uncertainty. Ignatius waited weeks for a confirmatory sign from God on his decision, and that sign never came. Paradoxically, it was in the absence of the sign that he chose poverty for Jesuit churches. In short, he chose poverty while in a place of spiritual poverty, where there was little or no devotion or tears, but only his human freedom and trust in God. And he moved forward, bringing his discernment to his companions so that together they might reconsider a decision made in 1541. His discernment process, so clearly outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises* and so faithfully carried out

in his Diary, was not and is not a recipe for knowing God's will. Rather, it is a process that can bring us to a place of trust and freedom.

If there is a transformation that takes place in the study of the Diary, and I venture to say of any spiritual text which becomes the focus for a dissertation, perhaps it is this same experience of freedom. We write and we study, and the spiritual texts open us to a new experience of freedom. In the end dissertations and articles may or may not be relevant; they may or they may not shed new light on a charism of the Church. Nevertheless, the study of spirituality need not be confined by relevance. Perhaps something of my grandmother's visit to the cathedral on her way home offers an image for the relationship between academic study, research and spirituality. The article or dissertation is a small offering, a gift given to another. The researcher and the writer realise an exercise in devotion, a kind of small candle lit out of love for another before the One who is Light and Love itself.

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THE EUCHARIST AND CARE OF CREATION

An Ancient Perspective

John Moffatt

WE SOMETIMES SEE TEXTS from the work *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus, the second-century bishop of Lyons, quoted to prove the antiquity of Christian belief in the real presence. But some of those quotations are worth exploring in their wider context, because they form part of a much bigger argument. Irenaeus tells a story affirming God's relation to the cosmos that binds the eucharist into the goodness of the created order, and the practice of social justice and care of creation.[1]

Irenaeus' primary concern is anthropocentric, the salvation of individual humans through the death and resurrection of Christ. And that means specifically bodily resurrection and the life of the world to come. Nevertheless, his holistic depiction of the relation between creation and redemption, and therefore of the seamless nature of salvation, is still thought-provoking—particularly when we look at some of the ideas he was resisting, and recognise in them, too, some contemporary resonances.

His primary targets are various Gnostic versions of Christianity and the quasi-Gnostic theory of the Christian teacher Marcion. The origins of Gnosticism are contested but its language and argumentation characteristically weave Platonizing language in with concepts drawn from the Jewish and Jewish-Christian tradition, to form elaborate theories of the birth of the universe. These then provide a framework for a highly intellectualised narrative of salvation by knowledge (gnosis).

From the One, the serene source of all things, there emanates a sequence of cosmic beings, the last two of whom 'sin' and produce

[1] I'll be drawing on passages from *Adversus haereses*, 4.17–18, 5.1–2, 33–34, taking the text from *Patrologia Graeca*, edited by Jean-Paul Migne, volume 7 (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857).

misbegotten and evil matter. It is left to an unfortunate demiurge (a second-order divine craftsman) to make the best of a bad job and try to turn the recalcitrant material on hand into something worthwhile. The messed-up world around us represents the best he could do. Salvation means escaping from this miserable place through a privileged knowledge granted to the chosen few, getting away from the world of matter into the world of spirit. It is a disembodied salvation for intellectual or spiritual selves who happen to be trapped in material bodies, from which they need to be freed.

Marcion offered a variant that was less extravagant in the number of cosmic beings required and used a closer reading of scripture (thus making him a more threatening adversary). The God of the Old Testament is the bad-tempered demiurge, who produces a flawed world of flawed humans reluctantly tamed by law and violence. Paul and Luke, however, proclaim the God of Jesus Christ as a loving Father, the ultimate source of reality, to whom the chosen can escape by listening to and accepting his words about love and grace. The world of the New Testament (or a sanitised version of it) must replace the world of the Old.

In all these variants, the words of Paul—'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom' (1 Corinthians 15:50)—have a challenging significance for the orthodox tradition. The doctrine of the Word incarnate is reduced to a symbol of the reality of the Word as divine messenger, in the appearance of fleshly humanity. The crucifixion is an illusion or an irrelevance. Death and bodily resurrection are an allegory for the journey of rescued souls, not realities of intra-mundane history. For there can be no union between matter and spirit. It is only in the spirit that we can be saved.

There are some modern understandings of Christianity that are not a million miles away from this, and they do not lend themselves to concern for the planet any more than ancient Gnosticism. But then we do not have to be religious to become caught up with our identity as intellectual agents—ready to escape the flawed reality of our alien world as soon as we invent the warp-drive—and forget our identity as embodied beings for whom the inescapable reality is that if we do not live in symbiosis with our environment, then we do not live at all.

When Irenaeus turns to presenting the orthodox view, it is crucial to him to affirm that the creator God of the Old Testament and the redeemer God of the New are one and the same. It is God's spirit that pervades and guides the whole of creation. The Word of God then really

entered the world made through him. He had a real fleshly body, really died and really rose, and all this so that our own embodied selves could finally enjoy the eternal life for which we were originally destined.

The Old Testament is far from irrelevant. The call to justice, the sharing of goods, a community that upholds the rights of the poor, all of which are so central to the Torah and the writings of the prophets—none of these is superseded in the New Testament. They continue to reveal the real meaning of all religious sacrifice and cult, namely, inner conversion and right living. It is only when these principles are observed that there is any point in going to the altar to offer sacrifice. Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable to God because of his failure in communion, in sharing the goods he had received from the earth through his labour. The things of the world are valuable and its people matter in the new dispensation just as much as the old.

That imperative to right social communion applies just as much for a valid celebration of the Christian sacrifice of the eucharist. And as Irenaeus begins to speak of this, he puts it in the context of creation, which entirely belongs to the God who made it and who guides it from moment to moment. We can offer him nothing that he does not already own. But what we can do is offer the first fruits of creation, as Jesus commanded us, 'not because he needs it, but so that we may not be unfruitful or ungrateful'.[2]

Based on images © Jasper Boer and Freepik

The bread and the wine we offer are themselves the gifts that the Creator gives us to sustain our lives. This language of 'nourishment' and 'growth' is crucial in Irenaeus' account of the eucharist. The

[2] *Adversus haereses*, 4.17.5.

real, this-worldly nourishment through the bread and wine commutes into the real nourishment for the life beyond through the body and blood of the Lord. The work of the creator flows into the work of the redeemer, and the growth towards redemption flows through the divinely sustained growth of creation. And it is at this point that Irenaeus reproaches the Gnostic Christians who claim to celebrate the same eucharist for their failure in logic:

> How can they possibly claim that the bread over which the thanks are spoken is the body of their Lord and the cup, the cup of his blood, unless they acknowledge that he is the Son of the one who fashioned the world? That he is his Word, through whom the tree bears fruit, through whom the streams flow, and through whom the earth brings forth first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear?[3]

And if this is so, how can they not acknowledge that the flesh can receive eternal life? Irenaeus presents a vision of continuity between our life here and the life of the world to come, in this moment where the heavenly and the earthly naturally and properly meet, in the action of the Eucharist. He makes the point more fully later:

> If [our flesh] is not saved, then the Lord did not redeem us by his blood, and the cup of the Eucharist does not give us a share in his blood, nor is the bread that we break a sharing in his body. For since we are his limbs, and we are nourished through creation, and he himself provides us with this creation, causing the sun to rise and bringing the rain as he will, he acknowledges the cup, drawn from creation, as his own blood, from which he makes our own blood flow, and he affirmed that the bread that comes from creation is his own body, from which he will make our bodies grow….[4]

How could we fail to acknowledge that these bodies of ours, Irenaeus asks, nourished by the Lord's body and blood, are destined for eternity? Again, Irenaeus gives us a vision of death and the afterlife not as a rupture with our physical past, but as its organic completion in a new, eternal and embodied harmony.

Towards the end of the fifth book, he presents a vision of the new creation drawing heavily on imagery from Isaiah. Here (and elsewhere)

[3] *Adversus haereses*, 4.18.4 (emphasis added).
[4] *Adversus haereses*, 5.2.2.

he is, following Genesis 1, unashamedly anthropocentric. All the animals will be completely subject to the redeemed humans, the plants will vie with one another to provide them with more fruit.[5] The vine belongs both in this world and in the world to come, which is a recognisable, physical paradise, but renewed and liberated and in which relationships between the living creatures are restored to harmony. The new creation does not lie in the intellectual construct of an unimaginable beyond, but is already glimpsed in the world of our experience. The old creation is not to be effaced as a failure; rather, it is to grow to completion as something greater.[6]

Irenaeus is not offering a programme for living in harmony with creation. After all, he lived at a time when, for all the real environmental degradation and exploitation that went into feeding the Roman empire, most people were much closer to the land and much more aware of their vulnerability to nature's whims. The idea of humanity's being in a position significantly to control or subvert the natural order would be ridiculous.

Nevertheless, he does warn us against damaging narratives of creation and redemption, and offers an alternative that can spur our own reflections on what such a programme for care of creation might look like. And he gives us a vision of eucharist as a liminal space in which communion (*koinonia* or 'sharing in common') binds us with the whole natural order, with one another and with the incarnate Word, as we are nourished on the journey to redemption.

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[5] *Adversus haereses*, 5.33–34.

[6] *Adversus haereses*, 5.36.1.

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CONTEMPLATIVUS IN SCRIBENDO

Writing a Thesis as Making the Spiritual Exercises

Antonius Sumarwan

> The greatest challenge in writing a dissertation is not the intellectual but the spiritual.[1]

THE ENDEAVOUR TO MAKE Ignatian spirituality into a framework for learning is not new. For Roman Catholic educators and their students, especially those in contact with Jesuits, Ignatian pedagogy is already a familiar teaching practice. Since the publication of *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* in 1986, followed by *Ignatian Pedagogy* in 1993, efforts to develop Ignatian pedagogy and introduce it to a broader audience have been growing.[2]

Nevertheless, using Ignatian pedagogy, especially the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises, in writing theses or dissertations is still relatively rare. This is quite surprising, considering that such work consumes so much of students' time and energy, and is often so important to the successful completion of a degree. There are at least three potential benefits to writing a thesis as making the Spiritual Exercises.

First, this approach helps students to find spiritual value in the effort of writing a thesis. By applying a spiritual exercise framework to the process, they may experience it as *walking* and *working* with God. Secondly, students may receive *supplementary energy* to ease the burden of the task and improve the chances of completing the work on time. When the process of writing is one of walking and working with God, even if it is a struggle, the students do not feel they are alone, relying

[1] Nicholas Austin, 'Mind and Heart: Towards an Ignatian Spirituality of Study', *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 46/4 (Winter 2014), 39.
[2] See International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (Rome: Jesuit Curia, 1986), available at https://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/Characteristics%20of%20Jesuit%20Education.pdf; and *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (Rome: Jesuit Curia, 1993), available at https://jesuitinstitute.org/Resources/Ignatian%20Pedagogy%20(JI%20Edition %202013).pdf.

only on their own efforts. If they encounter difficulties, this framework can help them become aware more quickly of how God can surprise them with a wonderful plan behind their problems, setbacks or even failures. Thirdly, in a broader context, writing a thesis as a spiritual exercise will also help students integrate study and spiritual life.

Jesuits have a strong spiritual and intellectual tradition, but these two are often seen as separate, and sometimes opposed to one another! Nicholas Austin writes:

> It is obvious even to a casual observer that the Society of Jesus places immense value on academic pursuits. It also has a rich spiritual tradition. Yet these two aspects of Jesuit life do not always seem well integrated into a spirituality of study itself. It is almost as though the message inadvertently given is *that one can find God in all things, except study*.[3]

However, being contemplative in writing is a subset of being contemplative in action. We can find God in all things, even in the writing process.

Alignment of the Spiritual Exercises and Thesis-Writing

When we compare the operation of the Spiritual Exercises and the writing of a thesis, several parallels may be identified. First, both are lengthy activities. Done on retreat, the Spiritual Exercises take around thirty days, while in daily life (Annotation 19), they can take six to twelve months to complete. Likewise, a student needs at least three months to write an undergraduate thesis. Writing a doctoral dissertation often takes years.

Making the Spiritual Exercises and writing a thesis are complex tasks with many challenges. Both require commitment and diligence, and those intending to do them need to be properly prepared. Before making the Exercises, exercitants need to have basic skills in silent and mental prayer such as mediation and contemplation. Writing a thesis requires various skills in determining the topic, formulating research questions, collecting and analysing data, and then writing up the complete thesis.

Both processes involve mentors. The giver of the Exercises provides prayer material, helping exercitants recognise how God interacts with them and discloses God's will in practice. The giver also helps exercitants to discern the movement of the good and bad spirits, and encourages and supports them through the process, while always respecting the need

[3] Austin, 'Mind and Heart', 2 (my italics).

to step back and 'allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord' (Exx 16). Similarly, the thesis supervisor helps students (for example by giving directions, asking questions or suggesting resources). Though the supervisor helps the student, the process of writing a thesis is still challenging. Unlike a retreatant, the student needs to adapt to the supervisor's particular working styles, and be prepared to receive criticism.

The Spiritual Exercises and writing a thesis are personal journeys. Even when several retreatants are making the Exercises simultaneously accompanied by the same giver, the process remains a strictly personal one because prayer happens individually, and the prayer material is adjusted to suit the differing needs of each exercitant. Similarly, in writing a thesis, though the students may attend classes, interact and work together, they will finally do the reading and writing alone in their room or library.

Occurring over a long time, both the Spiritual Exercises and writing a thesis oblige people to do many repetitive activities. In the Spiritual Exercises, the daily routine involves five one-hour prayer periods followed by reflections, two examinations of consciousness (Examen) at midday and night, and a meeting with the giver of the Exercises. These activities are repeated daily with different prayer materials. Similarly, in writing a thesis, the actions of reading, writing and correcting, and discussions with the supervisor and other associates, are repeated many times throughout the project.

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As both processes are so lengthy, those undertaking them also experience a dynamic of *ups* and *downs.* In the Spiritual Exercises, these are referred to as *consolation* and *desolation*. When exercitants experience consolation, they feel comforted, prayer flows easily and they experience closeness to God. In contrast, when they are in desolation, they face difficulties in their prayer and feel no comfort, and God seems far away. Although the terms *consolation* and *desolation* are

rarely used in writing a thesis, similar dynamics occur.[4] Sometimes, ideas seem to flow easily; but at other times the stream of ideas dries up, the mind goes blank, and only a paragraph or two may result from a whole day's efforts. There are times when students will be quite excited about their research but, at other times, they experience a sense of being flat and tired. Experiences of joy, and of desperation to the point of wanting to give up, can happen both during the Spiritual Exercises and when writing a thesis.

To help those who do the Spiritual Exercises adopt the appropriate disposition towards the dynamics of consolation and desolation, Ignatius developed the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. These are applicable not only to the Spiritual Exercises but also to other activities in daily life, such as academic research to understand and manage *ups* and *downs*.

Differences between the Spiritual Exercises and Thesis-Writing

Before we go any further, what distinguishes making the Spiritual Exercises from writing a thesis also needs to be pointed out. The purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is to help exercitants build spiritual habits to find God in all aspects of their lives; while the purpose of writing a thesis is to help students learn to develop research skills and gain a qualification. The Spiritual Exercises are often used to help someone find God's will about a call to religious vocation or marriage, or a major work choice: a direct outcome of the Spiritual Exercises can be a major decision (election), believed to be God's will for the retreatant. By comparison, the tangible results from a thesis are research reports, sometimes followed by the publication of papers.

Making the Spiritual Exercises also differs from writing a thesis regarding the core activity of each. The main activity of the Spiritual Exercises is prayer, while the main activities in producing a thesis are reading, thinking and writing. In the Spiritual Exercises, the topics for spiritual conversation with the giver are the exercitant's own prayer experiences, while in writing a thesis, students discuss their writing and research progress with the supervisor.

The comparison between the Spiritual Exercises and writing a thesis is schematized opposite, with the differences indicated in italics.

[4] Austin provides some guidance on when strong feelings are not present, and particularly how we can still experience consolation or desolation in the context of study. He uses the theory of flow taken from positive psychology, aligning the experience of flow with consolation and psychic entropy with desolation (Austin, 'Mind and Heart', 26–30).

	Spiritual Exercises	**Thesis-Writing**
Main Activities	*praying, reflecting on the experience of prayer, spiritual conversation with the giver*	*reading, collecting and analyzing data, writing, and discussions with advisers*
Duration	thirty days (six months or more for Annotation 19)	at least three months
Difficulty	significant commitment of time and effort	significant commitment of time and effort
Mentor	spiritual director	thesis supervisor
Practice	individual, personal, done alone but with oversight or guidance	individual, personal, done alone but with oversight or guidance
Under Discussion	*prayer experiences*	*research experiences*
Dynamic	consolation or desolation	ideas flowing smoothly or blocked
Rules for the Discernment of Spirits	help in managing spiritual consolation and desolation	help in managing the ups and downs of writing
Goal	*general: establishing spiritual habits* *specific: life decision or election*	*general: building habits of study and research* *specific: producing a finished text*

The differences ultimately do not preclude the adoption of the Spiritual Exercises as a framework for writing a thesis. Those who believe that God can be found in all things should not be surprised that God can be found here as well. If the Spiritual Exercises increase our sensitivity to finding God in daily life, treating writing a thesis as a spiritual exercise can increase our sensitivity to the work of God in research activity. If writing a thesis becomes the basis for contemplation (*contemplativus in scribendo*), it is possible to experience the process as walking and collaborating with God, and so find in it spiritual meaning and renewed energy.

Contemplativus in scribendo

In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius provides not only the material for both meditative and contemplative prayer, but also a variety of guidelines regarding the disposition of retreatants and how they should manage their prayer time (Exx 5, 12, 13 and 20); how to arrange their daily

schedules (Exx 73–74, 83–84, 88, 127–131); the steps involved in meditation (Exx 46–61) and contemplation (Exx 101–117); how to examine consciousness (Examen; Exx 24–31); rules for discernment (Exx 313–336); and the conduct of the one giving the Exercises (Exx 6–17). These may all potentially be relevant to writing a thesis. However, here I shall take the prayer process in the Spiritual Exercises as the starting point for adopting the Exercises as a framework for writing a thesis.[5]

Ignatius offers three essential guidelines for the prayer process: preparation; conducting the prayer; and reflecting on prayer experiences. To deepen the prayer, Ignatius also asks us to engage in repetitions. To use the thesis process as a prayer, these same three steps need to be carefully performed, and accompanied by repetitions whenever possible.

Preparing the Prayer

Ignatius suggests that preparation for prayer begins the night before. His instructions are as follows:

> Upon going to bed at night, just before I fall asleep, I will think for the length of a Hail Mary about the hour when I should arise, and for what purpose; and I will briefly sum up the exercise I am to make.
>
> Upon awakening, while keeping out any other thoughts, I will immediately turn my attention to what I will contemplate in the first exercise, at midnight. (Exx 73–74)

Ignatius emphasizes that preparing for a prayer requires remembering the points that will be prayed upon the next day. In this way, exercitants will already have absorbed the atmosphere of the prayer, and so will be better ready to perform it when the time comes.

In the Spiritual Exercises, exercitants are given two topics, commonly taken from scripture. The first step is to read the text of the prayer material for the next day and note the points on which to focus. When prayers are replaced by research activity, preparation means planning the activity that one will do in the next day. For example, if this will be seeking additional reading or data, preparation may involve remembering the topic to be focused on tomorrow and where the material might be found. If the reading material is already in hand, and the focus for the

[5] My approach is not entirely new; it is similar to that of Robert Marsh, who adopts the structure of prayer in the Spiritual Exercises as a framework for conducting spiritual direction. See Robert R. Marsh, 'Imagine Ignatian Spiritual Direction', *The Way*, 48/3 (July 2009), 27–42.

next day is on reading, preparation may include recalling the essential questions to be answered by the reading. If the main activity of tomorrow is to be writing, the preparation may be considering what the topic of writing will be; or if there is already an outline of what is to be written, then this outline itself may be recalled. By conducting a preparation at night, students will already have a picture of what they will do the following day and can develop a focus for their activities.

In addition to planning and imagining what to do on the following day, another critical aspect of preparation is to consider a particular grace we need to ask of the Lord so that we can accomplish our plans. For Ignatius, all we have and do is by the grace and mercy of God. So it is only by the grace and mercy of our God that we can pray or write a thesis and gain the fruits of prayer or make progress in our research. Therefore, in the preparatory step, students should ask God to bestow on them the grace they need to do their work successfully the following day. Acknowledging this grace builds the disposition to recognise that they do not work alone, but with God. They are also continually reminded that if progress occurs on the following day it is solely due to the grace and sustenance of God.

Furthermore, as well as helping students realise their dependence on God, the step of seeking God's grace helps them to formulate what they wish to accomplish on the day to come. For Ignatius, every prayer in the Spiritual Exercises—and for us, every step in writing a thesis—has a specific purpose, which is revealed in the action of asking for what we long for (*the grace for what I desire*), in Latin *quod volo* or *what I want.* This grace suggests the goal that exercitants seek in their prayer and serves as the reference point for assessing whether they experience consolation or desolation in that prayer. In the context of writing a thesis, the grace requested may be, for example, *the grace to be able to refine the research question* or *the grace to read diligently and understand a particular article*.

Conducting the Prayer

Ignatius composes the exercise of prayer in five systematic and structured steps.[6] The first three steps, the preparation, opening prayer and asking for the grace desired, are all directed towards the prayer points, the fourth step. This step involves interacting with God in what we are doing and

[6] I am drawing here on Michael Hansen, *The First Spiritual Exercises: Four Guided Retreats* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 2013) and *The First Spiritual Exercises: A Manual for Those Who Give the Exercises* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 2013).

in seeking the grace desired. In the fifth step, we converse with God and summarise our experience of prayer (Exx 46–48, 54, 75–76).

Preparation is an opportunity for silence, recognising ourselves as being in the presence of God. We are aware of what we will do (praying) and whom we will greet (God). Students realise that they will begin their research with God as a form of praise, devotion and offering of themselves to God. They consider what they will do today.

The opening prayer involves submission. Offering all intentions and actions to God is a personal response to God's presence in the preparation. Ignatius instructs that the general purpose of each prayer is devotion and praise of the Lord: 'to ask God our Lord for the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty' (Exx 46). By doing this, we open our minds, hearts and will for the entire use of the Lord. Students beg for the grace to direct themselves wholly to God, and to recognise and feel God's guidance and help in their research activities today.

T*he grace I desire,* which was formulated the night before, is now sought directly from the Lord. Students, too, ask God to give them a particular grace for this day. They should express the requested grace as specific as possible, so I can, for example, complete the formulation of research questions; understand the theory I use and apply it to my research; or find literature to support my arguments.

The prayer points (in contemplation or meditation) achieve the fulfilment of the grace sought. This is essentially a dialogue with the Lord: we speak with the Lord and listen to the response. We convey to God

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what we think, feel and want, then allow the Lord to respond. To hear this response we need to listen from the heart. The bible text acts as a basis for this conversation. With the whole self, using thoughts, feelings and will, students enter into the work of research (searching for data, reading, analyzing, writing, correcting scripts, discussing and so on).

Conversation (colloquy) at the end of prayer is like the closing words after a lengthy dialogue with a friend. Here we briefly convey to God our experiences (thoughts, feelings and desires) and ask for help, counsel and edification, especially so we can do God's will. We conclude the conversation with a prayer such as the Our Father, Hail Mary or Soul of Christ. Students end their day of research with a brief conversation with God, talking to God like a friend about what they have just done and experienced, once again concluding with a prayer.

The sense of closeness to God experienced in meditation and contemplation may also be found in research activities and writing a thesis. God may be experienced as a friend who supports students in various ways, for example, helping in the tedious task of examining data, in working with greater diligence and patience, and in understanding difficult texts. God may also lead them to find additional and unexpected readings, help them remain calm while writing, or even suggest that they should step back from what they are doing because they probably need to take a break. Any of these may be prompted by God. Students come to realise that they are not alone but have a companion who is always ready to accompany and help them. When experiencing difficulties, they may seek the help of this companion. Therefore, writing a thesis can lead them to converse directly with God and relate the challenges they are experiencing, the excitement of new findings and the insights they have acquired. They can also converse with God about their research topic, themselves, the world and God's own nature.

William A. Barry suggests that good prayer is always a conversation, 'a dialogue and not a monologue'.[7] After revealing their experiences to God, those writing a thesis need to listen to God's response. This could be an idea they did not previously consider or a certain feeling or desire to do other things. God can also respond through the people around them or certain events. Better to recognise and understand the Lord's response, Ignatius instructs us to reflect on our prayer experience.

[7] William A. Barry, *Praying the Truth: Deepening Your Friendship with God through Honest Prayer* (Chicago: Loyola, 2012), 8.

Reflecting on the Prayer

Reflection is a characteristic of Ignatian prayer. Occasionally, people praying the rosary, novena or other daily worship might reflect on their prayer experience, but such reflection is probably not a common activity.

In the Spiritual Exercises, retreatants are asked to reflect on their experience after completing a prayer exercise. Ignatius' account of such reflections is as follows:

> After finishing the exercise, for a quarter of an hour, either seated or walking about, I will examine how well I did in the contemplation or meditation. If poorly, I will seek the reasons; and if I find them, I will express sorrow in order to do better in the future. If I did well, I will thank God our Lord and use the same procedure next time. (Exx 77)

For Ignatius, reflection becomes an opportunity to multiply what happens during prayer. By providing time to examine what happens, retreatants can recognise when and why prayer goes smoothly or not, thereby understanding how to pray better. Ignatius did not want retreatants to ignore a prayer process that did not go well without exploring it more deeply. He believed that where there is resistance or reluctance to go deeper there is often something we need to learn and understand more about ourselves and our relationship with God.[8]

Additionally, the presence or response of God, which may not have been perceived during the prayer, may be seen more clearly at the time of reflection. Thus, reflection becomes an opportunity for us to look at what we feel, think about and observe during prayer. The reflection also allows us to practise the discernment of spirits and to assess whether we are in consolation or desolation, and whether the grace we asked for from God has been received.

Those making the Spiritual Exercises in the thirty-day retreat pray (meditation or contemplation) up to four or five times a day. Reflection needs to be done after each prayer period. When the framework of the Spiritual Exercises is adopted in writing a thesis, the entire research activities for a day, whose duration may be up to eight hours, is considered as a series of unbroken prayers. Therefore, reflections are done once a day. This reflection can be integrated with the Examen, a prayer undertaken by those making the Spiritual Exercises twice a day.

[8] See Ralph E. Metts, *Ignatius Knew* (Washington, DC: JSEA, 1995), 7–8.

The reflection on prayer and the Examen can certainly be done in silence by pondering and recalling only, but Ignatius suggested the results of these reflections should be written in a journal. Writing down a reflection forces us to gather our thoughts and experiences and express them clearly. This process helps us understand what we are going through and documents our experience for later reference. Michael Hansen calls a diary a 'Listening Book'.[9] He believes that when we read the book again, we revisit what we have previously experienced and try to listen to what God is saying through that experience. Indeed, God can speak to us when we read our journals.

In writing a thesis as a spiritual exercise, journal-keeping can be done either at the end or the beginning of the day, though morning is perhaps better. In the morning, yesterday's experiences are still in the mind; additionally, writing down the experience of the prior day in the morning may help students to initiate a dialogue with God at the beginning of the new day, allowing them to start its activities together with God.

To enrich the reflection done privately by the retreatant, it is recommended to engage in spiritual conversation with the giver of the Exercises. Such conversations take place daily during the Exercises, so the giver can assist retreatants in recognising how God may have been communicating with them. In writing a thesis as spiritual exercise, the spiritual conversation will be conducted less frequently, perhaps monthly. This does not have to be with a spiritual director and may involve groups of colleagues.[10] Before such conversation, students should read their spiritual journal to notice where the Lord has been acting in their experiences. It will be easier to extract these experiences if the journal has been kept weekly. In the spiritual conversation, each person talks about his or her experiences and, in turn, listens to the experiences of the others. This conversation gives an opportunity to learn from our colleagues how God has communicated with them and is an opportunity for us to receive God's message through the experience of others.

Writing as Prayer

Applying the framework of the Spiritual Exercises to the process of writing a thesis offers students the opportunity to undertake research as contemplation. Adopting this framework the students may experience

[9] Hansen, *First Spiritual Exercises: Four Guided Retreats* and *First Spiritual Exercises: A Manual*.
[10] Again, see Hansen, *First Spiritual Exercises: Four Guided Retreats* and *First Spiritual Exercises: A Manual.*

writing as prayer, in a continuous dialogue and working together with God. Those who wish to write their thesis as a spiritual exercise are invited to follow the steps below.

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Preparation plan the next day's activities and define the grace sought **Activity** follow the five steps of Ignatian prayer **Reflection** Examen write journal	**Reflection** 1. reread the journal and identify the key points 2. write a summary of each week	**Reflection** 1. read a summary of each week and notice any patterns or trends 2. write a summary of a month's experience 3. spiritual conversation with other participants

To examine the viability of the proposed framework in practice, I have invited some students to participate in experiential research.[11] Four students involved in this research have published their reflections in *Rohani*, a spiritual magazine published by the Indonesian province of the Society of Jesus.[12] While details regarding the process and results of this research are beyond the scope of this article, the participants' reflections show the benefits of this framework. Those reflections also indicate that adopting the Spiritual Exercises framework in writing a thesis helps the students to gain a deeper spiritual experience and write more effectively and peacefully.

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[11] The first experiential research was conducted from September 2018 to May 2019 involving three participants, followed by a second study in 2020 with six. Another experiment involved a PhD student from August 2020 to April 2021, and a fifth study of six participants was conducted from September 2021 to May 2022. Most of the participants, except one PhD student and one masters student, were Jesuit scholastics studying philosophy as undergraduates in Jakarta. I also adopted this framework in writing my own PhD thesis from 2019 to 2021.

[12] See *Rohani* (February, March and April 2020; June 2021).

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JOSEPH A. MUNITIZ SJ

Tributes, Reminiscences and Reflections

Joseph A. Munitiz SJ (1931–2022)

Father Joe, as he was known to his Jesuit brothers and his many devoted students, colleagues and friends, was a remarkable person: a great scholar, an affectionate teacher, a paternal figure for many of us who benefited from his scholarship, his guidance, his wisdom, his humility and his immense and sweet kindness. His death leaves us with a sense of great and irreplaceable loss.

His love for Byzantine literature, history and spirituality is reflected in his long and distinguished intellectual and academic life, the fruits of which we enjoy through his many publications. To build a mosaic of his personality, life and work we follow his journey in the world through his own eyes, as reflected in his 'Autobiographical tesserae', which he graciously composed at the invitation of colleagues and friends for a *Festschrift* presented to him a few years ago, to which we shall return.

Born of Spanish Basque parents in Cardiff in 1931, his earliest vivid memories were marked by the incendiary bombs that fell during the Second World War on the sacristy of his local church of Our Lady of the Angels. 'It was winter time', he remembered, 'and by the following morning the water thrown to put out the flames had become a sheet of ice'. His father, a ship-chandler, died when Joe was nine years old, and

his mother, a professional singer at one time, died three years later, leaving him and his two siblings, Marie and Arthur, to be raised by their aunt. Even after they moved to Crosby in Liverpool, where Joe attended St Mary's College, a day school run by the Irish Christian Brothers, Joe maintained his links with Spain; in 1947 he was sent with his brother to the Colegio Santa Maria, a boarding school in Vitoria for a year.

Spain also introduced him to Greek, the language destined to become his passion and focus of his professional occupation. In the beginning he was self-taught, though he was offered some assistance under the Jesuit scholar Domingo Mayor at the Junior Seminary of Comillas, Cantabria, where Greek and Latin were taught exclusively for one year thanks to the initiative of Father Pedraz, who promoted the value of their study. It was the course he organized that 'began to open my eyes to the beauty of language', Joe later remarked.

Meanwhile, he was increasingly feeling his vocation. 'More and more I knew that I would be happy only with the choice of a life dedicated to the service of Christ'. The Society of Jesus provided him with a long and thorough academic training, which included classics. Following the novitiate at Harlaxton (1950), he took first vows and made a year's juniorate at Manresa in Roehampton before he moved to Heythrop in Oxfordshire, where he was introduced to philosophical thinkers, among whom Hume captured his attention. Subsequently, he returned to Manresa for a third year in philosophy (1955), followed by a year in pedagogical studies (1956).

His awareness of the importance of editing texts may originate from the teacher and scholar he admired most, Christopher Devlin. But 'it was the Greats course at Oxford that really opened my eyes to critical thought', he stressed. Though he felt that his Latin, and even more his Greek, were not up to Oxford standards, the extraordinary kindness and support he received from his tutors, including Iris Murdoch, encouraged him to persist. Despite his efforts, he finished with a 'second' in his final exams, to his great disappointment.

In the 1950s there was a demand for teachers of classics in Jesuit schools. Following a year of regency at Stonyhurst teaching Latin, at his own request he was sent by the provincial to Spain, where he spent his four years of theology, after which he made his tertianship at Saint Beuno's under Paul Kennedy. Back in Comillas he found himself at an isolated, beautiful building overlooking the Bay of Biscay with an

awesome view of the mountain range Picos de Europa, where he enjoyed trekking and climbing. There he acquired his first pastoral experience with the families of the villagers on the mountain and their hard life. He was ordained in 1965, at the time of the Second Vatican Council, which inaugurated extensive reforms in the Roman Catholic Church and theology. Spain, then isolated by ecclesiastical and state censorship, with a few exceptions remained unaffected. In those years he became acquainted with the writings of the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner.

Meanwhile, Father Joseph Gill, the eminent historian of the Council of Florence, then rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, was looking for new staff, and Father Joe was sent by his provincial superior to study there for a licentiate in oriental theology, with the intention of joining their teaching staff. He went to Paris in 1969, where he first saw manuscript images of the *Treasury* (*Thesauros*) attributed to an otherwise unknown author by the name Theognostos ('Known to God'). 'That was the real start of my career', he remarked later.

During his research, while comparing two manuscripts, he discovered one that stated the exact number of years that had passed since the death of Christ, instead of giving a round number as the other did, thus allowing Father Joe to place Theognostos in the thirteenth century, a century earlier that was commonly believed. 'It was one of those "eureka" moments', he would recall, 'that make a scholar's life worthwhile. It may also open a window on what has been the work of my life.' By delving into Byzantium, he saw a Church 'blessed with a spirituality of extraordinary richness'. For him it was not only the Orthodox liturgical life but above all 'the texts that spoke so eloquently of contact with God'.

In 1976 Father Joe completed his critical edition of Theognostos, which he submitted as his DLitt. at the University of Paris. Wishing to proceed with his work and at the same time learn modern Greek and experience Greek culture, he spent a year in Athens, Thessaloniki and the island of Syros, which has a large Catholic community, where he served as assistant priest, and even performed a baptism in Greek, a memory he treasured.

Following the completion of his studies he joined the editorial team of the Greek Series of the *Corpus Christianorum* in Louvain (Leuven). The texts he published there 'represent many years of work', he remarked, 'but my heart was in that patient collation of manuscripts, where fascinating problems are hidden that need solving. Those who

have experienced the joy of editorial work are aware of the constant surprises it affords'. He later reflected on this in an inaugural lecture given to the Spanish Society of Byzantine Studies, under the title 'The Importance of the Secondary', pointing out that 'it is in the detail that a scholar finds his or her quarry: the marginal note, the unexpected variant that can change everything'.

On his return to London in 1983, where he joined the administrative staff of Heythrop College and undertook the editorship of *The Heythrop Journal*, he discovered that Julian Chrysostomides and Athanasios Angelou of Royal Holloway College were launching a postgraduate reading seminar. 'A very happy and fruitful collaboration ensued', he recalled. The University of London Postgraduate Working Seminar on Editing Byzantine Texts has continued its work without interruption to the present, testifying to the legacy of its founders.

In 1989, Father Joe was appointed Master of Campion Hall, Oxford, where his administrative and pastoral duties to the community of young Jesuits took priority. Nevertheless, he found time to devote himself to translations of texts, this time related to the Society of Jesus, which culminated in a translation of a collection of the *Personal Writings* of St Ignatius which appeared in Penguin Classics (1996). On retiring from Campion Hall (1998) he spent his first ever sabbatical year in the Jesuit theologate in Granada and a small Jesuit house in Cambridge. Accepted at St Edmund's College as Visiting Scholar he continued his work, with the help of Alexander Eaglestone, on the *Memoriale* of Luís Gonçalves da Câmara, a close friend of St Ignatius.

In 1999 he was appointed socius to the novice-master at Manresa in Birmingham, very close to the University of Birmingham, where he was warmly received by the flourishing community of Byzantinists at the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies. He treasured his close relationship with colleagues there, who invited him to participate in their ongoing projects. Father Joe received an honorary doctorate from the University of Birmingham in 2004. From his days in Birmingham, he cherished his association with the Jesuit Volunteer Communities, which confirmed his faith in today's youth, who still find inspiration in institutional religion. In 2010, he moved back to Campion Hall as assistant superior and was later appointed emeritus fellow and Librarian. There he continued his translation projects, producing a host of articles on spirituality originally written in Spanish or French.

In 2017, he moved again to London, spending his last years, first in the London Jesuit Centre in Mount Street, then the community at Copleston House and finally at the Corpus Christi Jesuit Community in Boscombe. Until the deterioration of his health in May 2022, he was active, keeping in touch with colleagues, former students and friends, continuing his translations of Ignatian and Jesuit spiritual works, assisting the editorial board of *The Way* and taking part in the local parish and religious life of the community. He always enjoyed a walk and he made frequent visits to the National Gallery, the Royal Academy and the Wallace Collection.

It was in the latter among his other favourite places where we met for light lunch on a Saturday last March. After sharing fond memories and thoughts on present and future scholarly projects, we toured the beautiful collection. I vividly remember when we stood across Velázquez's *The Lady with a Fan*. 'This happens to be my favourite picture in the Gallery', he said, 'It is its captivating simplicity'. And as Father Joe taught us through his example, there is greatness in simplicity.

In recognition and appreciation of his major contribution to Byzantine studies and for bringing greater understanding between the Greek East and the Latin West, a *Festschrift* was published by Brepols in 2019. In his 'Autobiographical tesserae' adorning the volume, on which this tribute is mainly based, Father Joe reflected on his life and work:

> I feel that if my life has been of any use, it is due to the publications I have been able to give to the world …. As the end comes in sight, I realize that books cannot be taken with me, though I am glad to have produced some to leave behind me. There is so much for which I am grateful! Byzantine studies have brought me above all such wonderful friendships. I have constantly met scholars, some of outstanding calibre, who were generous with me, and I can honestly say that, although not so gifted, I have tried to follow their example. People may think that life in a library is very shut in; they may not be aware that libraries with Greek manuscripts are often very far apart and in beautiful sites. My studies have taken me round the world, even to Beijing, thanks to my generous friend, Dr Lap Chuen Tsang (author of a key work on 'the sublime'). Again, my life in Campion Hall and responsibility for its art collection opened my eyes to a world of beauty of which I was woefully ignorant.
>
> To close, the words that come to mind are those I quoted in Birmingham when receiving my honorary degree. They come from the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins and I feel they apply to my own life as a Jesuit Byzantinist:

These things, these things were here and but the beholder
Wanting: which two when they once meet,
The heart rears wings, bold and bolder
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his
feet.[1]

Charalambos Dendrinos

The author encourages donations to the Joseph Anthony Munitiz Memorial Bursaries in Hellenic and Byzantine Studies established at the Hellenic Institute: https://royalholloway.ac.uk/about-us/our-alumni/for-alumni/support-us/ways-to-make-a-donation/donate-to-the-hellenic-institute/

Requiem Homily, 4 August 2022

> With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow, before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, and with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? He has told you … what is good. What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:6–8)

> Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35, 37)

> [Jesus said to his disciples:] 'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you'. If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. (John 14:25–28)

Joe would have appreciated the brevity of these three readings, full of Christian hope, and the admirable directness of their message. Joe the scholar, the painstaking editor and translator, did detail but not noise and fuss, let alone burnt offerings or rivers of oil. Justice and kindness

[1] Joseph A. Munitiz, 'Autobiographical tesserae', in *The Literary Legacy of Byzantium*, edited by Bram Roosen and Peter Van Deun (Amsterdam: Brepols, 2019), 5–14, here 13–14.

and humility were more his scene. I think he knew, just a few short months ago, that his death was imminent. He faced his declining health with great equanimity and gratitude, deeply aware that 'nothing … can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

The gospel reading is all about the truth that is Christ Jesus. It comes, of course, from Jesus' last supper discourse—his 'last will and testament'. It acts as a reminder of the central paradox of the gospel: that Jesus must return to the Father yet forever remains. To know the Father means living a life that is formed and guided by the Advocate-Spirit who stands by us to teach us how to enter into the inner depths of everything Jesus has said. In other words, the Spirit goes on inspiring repetitions—to invoke a good Ignatian theme—of Jesus' work of witnessing to the Father where all truth is to be found.

At our best that is what we do, what we are—repetitions or reflections of the image of God that is Christ. That is what the Apostles do, what all saints do, what Ignatius does—what Joe in his gentle understated manner sought to do: to intertwine his Jesuit inner life with the Byzantine literature he loved, to translate the one through the other, to the mutual enhancement of both. I think we can safely say that, if Ignatius is the Society's favourite Basque, Joe is the British Province's second favourite. They even look a bit the same.

That said, Joe was a Basque with a very definite difference. He was born not in Spain but in Cardiff. His parents both died when he was still quite young and he and his brother and sister were brought up by an aunt in Liverpool. He said of himself that he didn't really belong anywhere. He went to Spain in his teenage years, partly to restore something of his Spanish language, partly to begin to test out his vocation to the priesthood. Educated by de la Salle brothers in Cardiff and Christian Brothers in Liverpool, he first came across the Society of Jesus at Comillas, an afterwards on the north Spanish coast, where he was impressed by his Jesuit teachers' 'contact with Christ, their spirit of sacrifice'. In an interview published just two years ago, he quotes one of them to the effect that: 'To be a Jesuit it is well worth being psychologically unbalanced!'.[2] Thank you, Joe.

[2] Emanuele Colombo, '"Great Respect for Texts": A Conversation with Joseph A. Munitiz', *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, 8/2 (2021), 276–292, here 280.

I used to play squash with Joe when we were both at Heythrop College in the early 1980s. He was a very canny player. There was nothing unbalanced about the ease with which he would occupy the centre of the court and send his younger and more unfocused opponent running haplessly in all directions. Joe had come back to the province after a good few years doing research on the Byzantine texts that were for him such an object of fascination, first in Rome, then Paris and finally Leuven. He was now to be the editor of the *Heythrop Journal*. I was superior of the community and it took me a while to learn how much one can get Jesuits to do—especially academics with their sometimes obsessive dedication to clearly defined subject areas.

I think we quickly learned a great deal of respect for each other. I remember him saying to me once, as we walked back to the college, 'I'm a survivor'. It was a remark that stayed with me when I lived with him at Copleston House. He was not in good health and was getting deaf. But he impressed by his dedication to his work, to the routine of his day, and what he contributed to the community by example and kindly conversation. If, perhaps, his early years in the Society were marked by a dogged determination to 'survive', to work hard and make the best of his considerable talent as a scholar, later he mellowed and became a more compassionate version of himself. And perhaps what made the difference was his discovery—or rediscovery—of his fellow Basque. In that same interview he talks about Ignatius as a 'real person':

> … capable of extraordinary self-control (as when he underwent surgery on his leg) and able to attract followers in the service of Christ … but it was important for me to realize that like all human beings, Ignatius had his weaknesses. A contemporary described him as a little man with laughing eyes.[3]

It's the sort of detail in which Joe delighted—which in some ways he embodied. The expressions of grief and affection from his fellow Byzantinists speak consistently of his wisdom and kindness, generosity and serenity, as well as his immense abilities as a textual scholar. With his fellow Jesuits he could be a tad critical and truculent but he was also a thoroughly good companion, with an impish smile and lovely touches of humour. Joe was never one for the higher flights of theological

[3] Colombo, '"Great Respect for Texts"', 291.

speculation. He did not talk about himself with any freedom, but he always made his contributions to community faith-sharing with freedom and honesty. And in this last year I got a sense of what he found inspiring in the traditions of Orthodox Christianity.

At school he learned Latin but there was no Greek—so he taught himself. When he went up to Oxford he felt poorly qualified for the immense concentration on ancient Greek that the classics degree demanded. He persevered and achieved a very respectable degree but much of what he studied, and much of the very traditional Jesuit philosophy and theology course, he found uninspiring. Nor was he particularly thrilled when it was suggested that he begin doctoral studies in order to prepare himself to teach at the Orientale in Rome.

So how was it that Byzantine studies so caught his imagination? It may be the popular appeal of the three major texts which he edited with the Corpus Christianorum. Theognostos, Blemmydes and Anastasios of Sinai were not writing for scholarly theologians, but for the ordinary public; they all reveal the interests of laypeople. But maybe there is something else—something I can remember seeing in Joe's ever-so-slightly laughing Ignatian eyes.

He loved the Royal Academy and the National Gallery and had a particular affection for the Wallace Collection—and its splendid little restaurant. I would enjoy exchanges about the latest exhibition—especially when I got there first. Joe had a keen aesthetic sense, an eye not just for little unremarked details, but for the beauty of form and colour, and—if I may be permitted a brief theological aside—for the play of uncreated light as it shines through verbal and visual texts, all the varied icons of the Byzantine tradition.

The great contribution Joe made to the life of the Church and the Society was the hidden work of textual scholarship and translation. And maybe that is one way we human beings participate in the paradox with which I began—the paradox of returning and remaining, dying to self yet trusting that whatever we have done goes on growing and producing further fruit. Joe's witness to Christ lay not with the more familiar ministries of the Society, from missionary work on the frontiers to teaching and school chaplaincy, but with something that in many ways underpins them all—and makes both possible.

A few days after Joe's death I was celebrating Mass for four hundred fourteen- and fifteen-year-old boys from Wimbledon College. We were in the Sacred Heart church and our theme was St Ignatius. The chaplain

had prepared an order of service which was adorned with attractive little cartoon figures of Ignatius—Ignatius sitting on his bed of convalescence, a contemplative Ignatius staring out into the distance, Ignatius preaching in priestly vestments. In that church, as I pointed out to the boys, there are two further depictions of Ignatius. One is an imposing statue above the gothic arches, the founder of the Society set opposite St Francis Xavier, its greatest missionary. And the other a series of Romantic paintings in the Ignatius chapel—one of which adorned our order of service: Ignatius struck down by the famous cannonball, yet sword still raised, raging against the enemy: a powerful yet improbable image. Which, I asked the boys, is closest to the truth? And how would we know any of them is true?

To answer that question, I picked up the Penguin Classics collection of Ignatius' *Personal Writings*, which Joe edited with Philip Endean, and said a few words about the Autobiography—'Reminiscences', as Philip puts it. What holds all the modern depictions of Ignatius together, all the ways in which we go on trying to explain his influence for today, is what he himself says—his story, his account of what moved him to follow the way of Jesus. And to be in touch with that story, indeed with any story, we need scholars who can give us an accurate reading and translation. We need a Joe.

We live by texts of all kinds, verbal and visual. And such texts and the traditions they generate, says Joe, have to be as authentic as possible, as accurate as possible, if they are to be properly understood and continue to act as vehicles of the Holy Spirit who forms us into words and images of Christ.

From the Obituary, Letters and Notices

Joe's natural reserve masked a depth of human sympathy and love of people's simple goodness. He had a reputation for hospitality and friendship, and enjoyed nothing so much as putting people in touch with each another. This was a side of Joe not everyone saw. They didn't have to be scholars or intellectuals. At Harborne he established a close rapport with that legendary duet who presided over the kitchen, Martina and Colette, and spoke to them every week on the phone until near the end of his life. At his funeral another friend who referred to himself as a 'fellow Welshman', recalled how they would Skype for fifteen minutes of prayerful conversation every morning. He also seems to have missed his vocation as a travel agent. While at Harborne he

would organise trips to ordinations in Antwerp, Leuven and Amsterdam. And his fellow jubilarians much enjoyed Munitiz-led jollies around the Ignatian sites in northern Spain and Paris.

* * *

As a Jesuit Joe was well aware that the life of the full-time textual scholar was privileged. He could be quite sharp—and not for nothing was he sometimes referred to as Mutinous Joe. Yet one could not fault his devotion to the Society, his support for the breadth of its mission, and his admiration for its early heroes, such as Thomas Stephens, the first English Jesuit in India. The Penguin Classics edition of Ignatius' *Personal Writings* makes available to the wider public some of the most important work on the seminal documents of the Society. Joe's introduction, with its understated reference to the semiotics of Roland Barthes, is a small masterpiece of conciseness and wisdom about the significance of texts in human culture.

He was unstinting in his championing of *The Way*, both as author (his last article appeared in July 2022) and as a member of the editorial board. He was also bibliographer of the province for many years and a major source of support and encouragement to various editors (including this one). At the end of his life, when his hearing was beginning to fail, he rarely missed community meals or meetings, took a great interest in the intellectual development of the younger men, and regularly celebrated the evening Mass at Copleston (with typically eccentric adjustments, such as insisting always on calling the Pope the 'bishop of Rome').

Joe never gave much of himself away and conversation could be quite hard work. But once you had earned his respect, that prickly side of his character would mellow—and you knew you had a friend for life. Nicholas King, no mean slouch as a translator himself, says it was 'a pleasure to know him in older years; I never ceased to learn from him about what it meant to be a Jesuit. His prodigious and undemonstrative learning was a splendid example of what it meant to be a Jesuit scholar.' He always sought to intertwine his Jesuit inner life with the Byzantine literature he loved, to translate the one through the other, to the mutual enhancement of both.

Michael Barnes SJ

© Ed Webster

Joe in the Oxford Meadows

Joe was walking in the meadows, as he did every afternoon, meditating, praying, thanking God for His creation and asking forgiveness for his sins. A group of men, refugees from countries outside Britain who gathered there every day to talk, observed Joe's daily walks. One day they called out to him,

Tell us, holy man, about your God.

Joe thought hard, then replied,

My God is indescribable in human language.

My God always was, is and always will be.

My God is loving, caring for every man and woman personally—and for the entire earth which is His creation

My God is attentive to the needs of each person on his earth. My God listens attentively to every person.

My God leaves us humans to make our own decisions. We have free will.

We have been given free will by our God, who is always alongside us as we make wise and unwise decisions and take actions which are not always wise and good. He doesn't interfere, but is there guiding and protecting us—all of us including me!

Our God is not human. He is neither male nor female. He sent his son who took a human form and lived among us for thirty years. The Son of God preached that we should love our neighbour as ourselves and showed us in His life how to do this.

Joe's listeners fell silent, wondering at these words. Then they asked' *Are you a good man, without sin?* Joe was silent for a while. Then he smiled and answered.

> *No one is without sin. But we must continually acknowledge and repent for our sins. In our New Testament we have the story of the Son of God's life on earth to inspire and guide us. This is our inspiration.*

Joe stood there for a while. But his listeners were deep in thought. Relieved not to be challenged further, Joe said goodbye and continued on his way, pondering his own words …

Ahilya Noone

A Personal Memoir of Joe Munitiz

I was introduced to Joe at the end of 2017 by a mutual friend. I was a (very) mature student, in the second year of an MA in theology at Heythrop College, during the last year before its closure. I was also quite a new Catholic. I can't remember what the basis of our meeting was—whether it was for spiritual direction, but what I found instead seemed more mutual: a deeply inspiring and uplifting spiritual friendship, which was very rare (in my life at least). On reflection, this was perhaps exactly in the Ignatian tradition, where conversation is an important path to spiritual growth and awareness.

We met first at Mount Street Jesuit Centre. I wrote in my diary that he was 'very nice and gentle' and wore 'rather run-down sandals'. We had a good talk and I noted that 'I felt better after the meeting'. We continued to meet at Mount Street, then at Copleston House when Joe took up residence there. He would give me lunch, and on the first occasion I was a bit surprised when he asked me to show him how to scramble eggs! After that he always insisted on making them himself, while I set the table.

When lockdown arrived in the spring of 2020, our relationship took a new turn. Joe moved to the Jesuit retirement house at Boscombe near the south coast as it was thought he would be safer there than in London. At Joe's suggestion, we set up a connection on Skype, and from then until the very end of his life, we had a regular appointment for a video call every Wednesday morning. Joe was extremely punctual; his life was well regulated. Our talks lasted exactly 40 to 45 minutes and when the time came to finish, he held up the little clock he kept on his desk, smiled, and started to wave goodbye. We never met in the flesh again, not even when Joe returned for a while to London after lockdown was over. I think we both found Skype more convenient, and certainly

it wasn't a barrier. I felt, and still feel, as if Joe has really visited me in my home, seen my garden, met my cats, and when I sit at my computer, I am sitting in the same place where I used to sit and talk to him.

We talked about all kinds of things, mainly around the books we were reading, or perhaps a television documentary, or an art exhibition. Joe would recommend books and sometimes send them to me, if he thought they would be helpful. I was immensely grateful for his generosity when he bought me a copy of the *Oxford Commentary on the Bible*, which I have found immensely valuable. A strong believer in the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, Joe saw a historical critical approach to scripture was an accompaniment to faith not a contradiction. As a translator and editor of Byzantine texts Joe was a historian too.

One day he sent me a draft of an interview that was to be published in the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*. He asked for my comments as he said he'd found it difficult to write. It was clear that Joe did not like writing or talking about himself. He passed quickly over the childhood trauma of losing first his father then his mother within three years of each other. Fortunately he and his two siblings were adopted by a kind aunt who, like his father, had settled in this country. Later his aunt fostered his Spanish roots and he spent three years in Spain as a teenager. He was particularly pleased, I think, that he shared his Basque identity (on his mother's side) with Saint Ignatius.

As well as outlining his various studies and research in different parts of Europe, along with the many languages he acquired along the way, the account includes some personal notes. He tells how his elder brother at first thought of becoming a priest, but when he changed his mind, Joe felt 'that the burden fell upon me'. This passed off, but later when at school in Spain, one day in his school chapel he felt a strong call 'to help Christ to carry His cross'. The call persisted and 'really changed my life'. From then on, he seems to have been guided—sometimes almost by accident—into the work he would seem to have been created to do. He also made clear, though, that attraction to the personal qualities of some Jesuits he met played a large part in his choosing to join the Society.

Joe admitted that his knowledge of the Ignatian Exercises 'has remained mainly on the theoretical level' and he did not want to devote his time to retreat-giving, though he recognised some might criticize him for this. He didn't discuss the Exercises with me, or suggest that I do them, though no doubt if I had raised the subject myself he would have encouraged me. His interest in Ignatius and his early community was

historical and biographical. It was clear that Ignatius was a cultural hero to him, but he did not engage in hagiography; he wanted to know the person, in his relationships, and with the perspective of time. Ignatius stands in his own time, he said, but we have to look at him also with the perspective of our own and he acknowledged that sometimes there are things to shock us. I noticed that in some ways Ignatius suffered similar childhood trauma to Joe himself, especially the early loss of his mother and an absent father. I wondered if this might have increased his empathy on a human level with the person who became a saint.

There was no doubt about Joe's deep devotion to Ignatius and to the Society which had become his family, and among whom he obviously formed many strong bonds of friendship. Another Jesuit 'hero' of Joe's was Pedro Arrupe, the former general of the Society, who was also a Spaniard and a Basque. Joe particularly treasured Arrupe's personal retreat notes, which he wrote during the customary week's retreat prior to his taking up the role of general. Arrupe saw this as a task of self-sacrifice and of sharing Christ's cross. Joe also admired and strongly supported Pope Francis. Both of these great Jesuits he saw as examples of Ignatius' ideal of 'contemplation in action'. A Catholic lay person whom he admired as a 'secular saint' was Vačlav Havel, the Czech dissident and playwright who became his country's first elected president, and he lent me a book of Havel's political speeches.

It is interesting that both Arrupe and Ignatius had an outstanding capacity for friendship, while Joe described himself as 'lacking social skills'. There seems to me no doubt, however, that Joe, in his modest, unassuming way, also had a great capacity for friendship. He was a good listener, the sort of person who draws you out and gives you confidence. This was because he really wanted to know what you thought; he wasn't just seeking an audience for his own ideas. My own academic background (at a very much lower level of scholarship than his) is in the history of religions, especially with regard to Hinduism. At Heythrop I studied for an MA in Christian theology because I was interested in comparative theology and interfaith dialogue. Joe took a keen interest as the subject was comparatively new to him and asked to read my dissertation. He pulled out some extracts which he suggested I develop into two articles for *The Way*, which were eventually published, to my great delight.

Joe had many interests beyond his researches, and our chats ranged widely. Sometimes he recommended novels, sometimes he sent me books that 'stretched' me, such as Fergus Kerr's introduction to Wittgenstein.

Another passion was art. He visited exhibitions for as long as he had the strength for them. His tastes encompassed modern art, including Picasso (which I could share) and even Francis Bacon (which I could not!).

What I cannot quite convey was how much Joe was a Catholic friend: all his lively interests in some way connected to the Roman Catholic faith—even Francis Bacon. I felt he stabilised and expanded my faith. To me he embodied Catholicism as a humane spirituality. But the opposite was blatantly out there. Joe was distressed and disillusioned by the abuse scandals in the Church. What I believe was his last translation is from the French of Patrick Goujon: *Pray Do Not Abuse*. It is an important book which should be widely read; its effect is all the stronger for its being written without bitterness and even with charity. Its English translation could be seen perhaps as Joe's final gift to the Church.

We were both elderly and could share and express some of the anxieties and regrets of old age alongside the hope of Heaven. At the end he was very stoical, which was why I never realised, except from others, the gravity of his last illness, so that he slipped out of my life quickly and quietly. In what I've written here I might have made our friendship sound mainly intellectual, but it was much more than that. Intellect and feeling were deeply blended in Joe Munitiz. His ability to listen wisely, his humility, which expressed a profound respect for others, his detachment from ego and his lively sense of humour, were all elements of his deep humanity which in turn was part of his spirituality. These are rarer qualities than we often know. His loss as a friend is huge but is balanced by the joy of having known him.

Kathleen Taylor

Charalambos Dendrinos is director of the Hellenic Institute and senior lecturer in Byzantine literature and Greek palaeography at Royal Holloway, University of London.

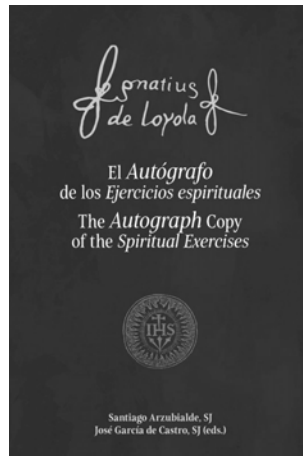
Michael Barnes SJ is the editor of *Letters and Notices*, the internal journal of the British Province of Jesuits, and teaches interreligious relations at the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Cambridge.

Ahilya Noone trained as a medical doctor and most recently practised in various public health areas in Scotland. She retired in 2006 and subsequently obtained an MA in theology and literature at Glasgow University.

Kathleen Taylor has studied Indian religion and history at SOAS, London University, and has an MA in theology from Heythrop College, London. She lives in London and is an independent researcher and writer.

RECENT BOOKS

***El Autógrafo de los Ejercicios espirituales: The Autograph Copy of the Spiritual Exercises*, edited by Santiago Arzubialde and José García de Castro (Bilbao: Mensajero, 2022). 978 8 4271 4595 5, pp. 448, €25.00.**



This important volume presents a colour facsimile of the 1544 Spanish manuscript of Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*. Often called the Autograph, the manuscript was in fact copied by a Portuguese Jesuit, Bartolomeu Ferrão, briefly Ignatius' secretary before the arrival of Juan de Polanco. Its prestige and title derive from the fact that, of the 45 marginal corrections, more than 30 come from Ignatius himself: the only elements of *Spiritual Exercises* that we have from his own hand.

Ignatius and his contemporaries do not seem to have taken this 1544 manuscript very seriously. The copying was entrusted to someone who was not a native Spanish speaker. Though there are many corrections, neither Ignatius nor anyone else bothered to iron out the traces of Portuguese. Nor does anyone seem to have bothered to make a clean copy. The official text from Ignatius' lifetime until the twentieth century was the so-called Vulgate, published in 1548 with the approval of the Holy See, and written in a cultivated Latin by André des Freux. Nevertheless, the importance of the Spanish Autograph manuscript was recognised officially by a Jesuit General Congregation as early as 1593–1594. Nineteenth-century Jesuits often used a parallel text edition presenting the Vulgate and a literal translation of the Autograph text into Latin made by Father General Jan Philipp Roothaan. In the twentieth century, perhaps rather unreflectively, and not without resistance from a doughty minority of scholars, the Autograph has come to be seen as the definitive source.

As early as 1908, when the publication of early Jesuit texts was in full spate, the Jesuits published a facsimile of the Autograph in Rome. In recent years, the manuscript has been restored by Melania Zanetti. Many dark spots on the paper were removed, and passages where the ink had seeped from the reverse side were clarified. This new facsimile edition, produced to mark the recent Ignatian jubilee year, reproduces the restored manuscript in

clear colour. As such it represents a significant advance. Another welcome innovation has been the provision of all the editorial material in parallel text: the editors' original Spanish, and a very readable English, thanks to Barton T. Geger from the Institute of Jesuit Sources at Boston College. On the rare occasions where the English is a little knotty, reference to the original easily clarifies the issue.

The facsimile, with printed transcriptions on facing pages, brings home to us just how little Ignatius seems to have cared about providing an easily readable text, and how much the printed versions we use today depend on a tradition of choices made—however reasonably and intelligently—not by Ignatius himself or his collaborators, but by printers and editors. In a salutary way, the facsimile brings out the difference between Ignatius' world and our own, and underlines how any written text was secondary to oral transmission. The text was always to be applied (Exx 18).

The facsimile is supported by a substantial introduction, in a tradition developed by such figures as José Calveras and Cándido de Dalmases for standard Spanish editions. Geger provides perhaps the first iteration of such writing in English. The Spanish editors contribute also from their own specialisms. Arzubialde is the author of a major theological commentary taking as a central theme a theology of the Holy Spirit that Ignatius did not express directly, while García de Castro is a specialist in sixteenth-century Spanish philology.

The introduction begins with a judicious treatment of the sources that may have influenced Ignatius and a reconstruction of how and when he put together his text. It goes on to provide an extensive theological account of the text's purpose and dynamic in dogmatic terms. There then follows an evocation of the different 'conversations' that the text involves, drawing on the account given by Roland Barthes: Ignatius' recommendations to the one who gives the Exercises; the interaction between the exercitant and the director; the prayers addressed by the exercitant to God; and the movements worked by God in the exercitant.

We then move to more textual considerations. One section, which might usefully have been a little fuller, brings out the complexity and plurality of the manuscript traditions. There is then helpful material on the Autograph manuscript itself: who the copyist was; his typical ways of working; an itemised list of corrections, not only made by Ignatius but also by Ferrão himself and by Paschase Bröet; and the characteristics of Ignatius' language at a time when Spanish itself was undergoing major changes. The editors go on to explain the conventions guiding their transcription, before offering a short bibliography on the history of the text and on linguistic questions. The facsimile is followed by helpful explicative notes.

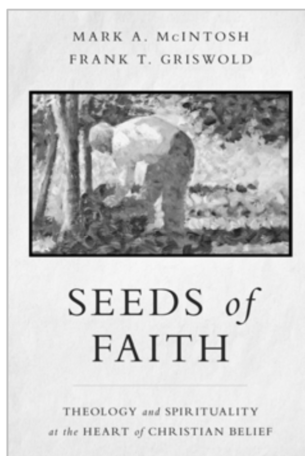
One could cavil here and there at the execution of the project. A theologically inclined reader might wonder about how the stress on divine freedom at the end of the section on Barthes can be reconciled with the rather prescriptive dogmatic theology that has preceded. There are editorial questions about how to mediate between the copyist's distinctive style and modern readability. The editors set out their conventions clearly, but we are left wondering about the rationale behind the compromises being struck between the copyist's particularities and modern readability. Why are some elements modernised and others not? At any rate, the choice to omit completely from the transcription the modern standard paragraph numbering will make it more difficult for many readers to benefit from this volume than it might otherwise be.

Nevertheless, this volume is an impressive achievement, to be welcomed with gratitude and admiration. It is beautifully produced, authoritatively edited, and an important source of information for anyone with a technical interest in the Ignatian Exercises. Moreover, the price for such a substantial and complex book, with so many colour illustrations, is refreshingly reasonable.

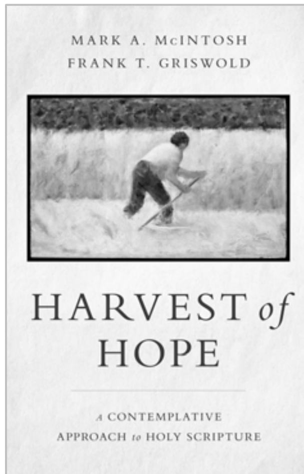
Philip Endean SJ

Mark A. McIntosh and Frank T. Griswold, *Seeds of Faith: Theology and Spirituality at the Heart of Christian Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022). 978 0 8028 7973 3, pp. 200, $24.99.

Mark A. McIntosh and Frank T. Griswold, *Harvest of Hope: A Contemplative Approach to Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022). 978 0 8028 7972 3, pp. 200, $22.99.



In considering different ways to deepen one's knowledge of God, it might be possible to think of theology as the theory and spirituality as the practice. At any rate, it seems clear that the two disciplines should ideally be held together and encouraged to influence each other. Without this, theology can become dry and abstract and spirituality take on a New Age embrace of diverse experiences lacking critical rigour or focus. These two linked books demonstrate some ways in which such mutual influence can work positively, in terms of doctrine (*Seeds of Faith*) and of scripture (*Harvest of Hope*).



Both works present elements of conversation between the principal author, Mark A. McIntosh, an Episcopal priest and theologian (who was also for a time canon residentiary at Durham Cathedral), and his friend Frank T. Griswold, a former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. McIntosh suffered from ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), a rare degenerative disease of the nervous system, and died of its effects in 2021. The books were written while he was in the later stages of this disease. Typically, he presents and develops an idea, and then Griswold comments on what he has written from his own, somewhat different, perspective, although the balance between the two shifts slightly in the latter parts of each book. Both men combine theological learning with pastoral practice—Griswold as a presiding pastor and McIntosh as a spiritual director and priest—and both draw deeply on the Ignatian tradition, as well as other spiritual paths.

Seeds of Faith is the earlier work, and takes a number of key theological ideas—revelation, the Trinity, the incarnation and grace, among others—and looks at them in the light of Christian spiritual experience through the ages. In an early chapter, McIntosh offers an image of God as an author—a novelist or playwright—and human beings as characters appearing in the works this author has written. As the conversation with Griswold develops this idea in the light of other theological concepts, various ways are illuminated in which God can thus be fully immersed in the world without being simply another part of it. The book as a whole builds up to a chapter on prayer, which offers some practical advice on this much-debated topic, drawing on the trinitarian ideas presented earlier. A final section considers dying, life beyond this one and the communion of saints, powerfully enriched by McIntosh's awareness of his own impending death.

If theology provides the framework for *Seeds of Faith*, scripture fulfils a similar role in *Harvest of Hope*. Referring to its predecessor, this book states clearly that it 'draws on the same understanding of the integrity of theology and spirituality'. It selects key biblical passages presented in the course of the Episcopal/Catholic liturgical calendar, and suggests ways in which they might be approached contemplatively. These ways range from accounts of the experience of one or other of the two authors as he prayed with a particular passage, through instructions for imaginative prayer in patterns that will be

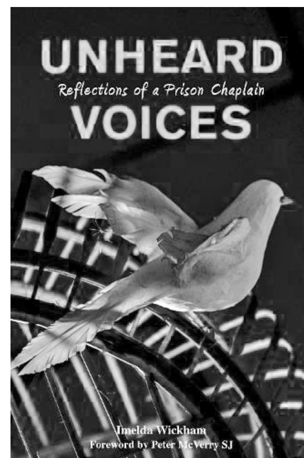
familiar to many readers of *The Way*, on to theological presentations of a bible story or liturgical season which serve to enhance the prayer that follows.

Before taking up individual passages, however, the writers offer introductory chapters on the whole idea of praying with scripture and outlining a theology of biblical contemplation. As well as giving a context for the material that follows, these are perhaps the most original parts of this second work, grappling with our understanding of the ways in which God, the author *par excellence*, uses the written word to communicate with human beings across wide ranges of time and of culture.

It will be important for a prospective reader to understand the kind of work that these two books represent. Obviously, at less than 200 pages each, they cannot pretend to offer comprehensive coverage of the theological concepts that they touch on, or even full details of how to approach each of these from a viewpoint of contemplative spirituality. The vision statement of *The Way* (found inside the front cover of each issue) speaks of this journal offering 'writing informed by critical and creative scholarship', and this is perhaps a good way of approaching the works under review here. They are excellent examples of a kind of spiritual reading that is able to engage both heart and head without being overly pious and sentimental on the one hand, or abstract and esoteric on the other, and they can thus be confidently recommended to anyone who wants to discover how spirituality and theology might genuinely be mutually supportive and clarifying.

Paul Nicholson SJ

Imelda Wickham, *Unheard Voices: Reflections of a Prison Chaplain* (Dublin: Messenger, 2021). 978 1 7881 2336 5, pp. 96, £11.95.



For the most part, prisons are necessarily closed places. Apart from open prisons, they have to be secure, behind walls with locked gates. You may have been past a prison and seen its tall thick walls and wondered just what goes on inside. Unless someone has served a prison sentence or has worked in a prison, he or she will have no idea. Most people's perception of these establishments is formed by the likes of *Porridge*, the very successful television comedy series (actually accurate in many ways), or by films such as *The Shawshank Redemption* with all the violence which seems to be so much a part of US

correctional facilities. There is the erroneous view pedalled in some sections of the press that prison is a soft option and that criminals live an easy life.

It is, therefore, very important that accurate and sensitive accounts are given of what happens behind the locked gates of prisons. At its most materialistic, those who pay for prisons through taxation need to know that their money is well spent. Victims of crime need to know that as well as prisoners being punished, their offending behaviour is addressed and risk is reduced. Those with a humanitarian and faith-based view of the world need to know that all those in prison are treated with respect, and that they are offered appropriate support to enable them to live useful and safe lives on release.

Imelda Wickham's short but inspiring book serves to open the doors of prisons so that the reader can hear the voices of those who are incarcerated within them. Her experience is drawn from her role as a chaplain in the Irish prison system, but the voices we hear through her writing could equally well come from British prisons. She writes: 'Their voices are seldom, if ever, heard, and it is their voices that need to be listened to …. I would not speak for them, but I would like to show something of what their lives are like.' (44)

'Unheard Voices' is in two parts. In the first, the author addresses significant issues around prisons, punishment and rehabilitation. The second—and very moving—part of the book is a series of reflections on real-life events, with real voices, which have inspired Sr Imelda's thinking. Motivating her throughout her twenty-year ministry is the understanding that 'prisons need to be seen as places where people, experiencing certain difficulties in life, are being helped and retrained for their future involvement in society' (45). Throughout the book, there is a feeling of anger and frustration that in reality prisons are unable to do this. She asserts that most prisons fail miserably, despite the efforts of prison staff, in their core role, which is to prepare people for re-entry into society. Running through the book is the view that there must be other ways of dealing more effectively with the issue of crime and punishment. Sr Imelda is a strong advocate of restorative justice.

Sr Imelda writes about the fact that anyone who has ever lived or worked in a prison will know well how corrupting the all-pervasive drug culture is. From the thousands of tragic drug users who end up in prison to those who are convicted of highly lucrative drug dealing, it is there all the time. Drug use is often rooted in poverty and also the cause of it. Her anger at this is clear: 'I have also observed how the addicted poor are criminalised, while addicted celebrities are feted and celebrated' (34).

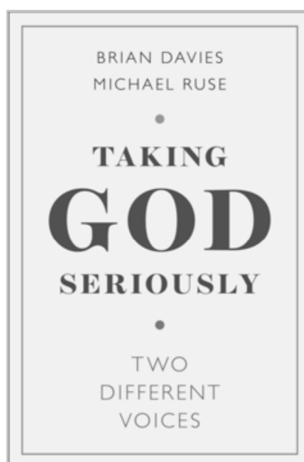
The author devotes much of her reflections to prisoners' families and especially mothers. There are accounts of separation and all too brief

phonecalls. We read how a mother's pride in her son's First Communion is dispelled by what happened later on in his life. We read of the fear of bereavement in prison and the agonizing wait to see whether permission is granted to attend a funeral.

Remarkably, despite the apparent darkness and frustration of prison ministry, Sr Imelda is able to write: 'The years I had spent among the imprisoned … were precious. They were probably the best years I had ever known' (94). No one who has worked in prison can fail to be moved and changed by this experience. *Unheard Voices* is a fine and moving account of prison life. It should be read by all those who wish to listen to the unheard voices of those who live and work in prisons. They may well find themselves changed.

Roger Reader

Brian Davies and Michael Ruse, *Taking God Seriously: Two Different Voices* (Cambridge: CUP, 2021). 978 1 1087 9219 6, pp. 236, £19.99.



Whatever one thinks of the merits of the 'philosophy of religion' it is undeniable that philosophical writing in English on matters concerning the existence of God and the particulars of religious faith has increased greatly in both prevalence and significance in the last few decades. Pioneers such as Alvin Plantinga in the USA or Richard Swinburne in the UK have laid the groundwork for philosophically informed and intelligent discussion of 'the God question' in a manner far removed from the tired polemic of the so-called New Atheism.

This volume, produced by two professors of philosophy, exemplifies its subtitle. Michael Ruse, a distinguished historian and philosopher of science, and former Gifford Lecturer, is a self-confessed agnostic who takes issue with traditional and contemporary defences of theism. His friend Brian Davies, a Dominican priest and leading authority on Aquinas, presents a philosophically rigorous account of classical theism. In this book, the two authors engage directly with one another's arguments, in an encouragingly frank and courteous intellectual exchange.

With chapters entitled 'Faith', 'Reason', 'Arguing for God', 'Against God', 'Morality' and Christianity', and concluding with a reflection from

each author, this book does exactly what it says on the tin. Ruse writes first in each section, and does so in an engagingly direct manner, rewarding the reader with his humour as well as his learning and insight. Davies's contributions are patient but direct, unafraid to question the assumptions of his interlocutor, and drawing upon a wide range of philosophical and theological material from the Jewish and Christian scriptures through Augustine, Anselm and Aquinas, up to Wittgenstein, Anscombe and Herbert McCabe. Ruse's expertise in the study of Charles Darwin comes through clearly, as does Davies's comfortable familiarity with the Latin Christian philosophical tradition.

Readers interested in theology and spirituality might be inclined to find some of the long-standing philosophical questions discussed here a trifle dry; it is hard, for example, to breathe new life into teleological or cosmological arguments for God's existence. However, the authors do a good job of deploying such traditional debates in a manner that provokes and attempts to answer wider questions about, for example, the status of theological language or the ethical implications of religious belief.

The authors share a commendable caution when it comes to God-talk. Ruse calls himself an agnostic rather than an atheist and rejects simplistic attempts to dismiss Christianity as a delusion of no merit or importance. Davies is one of our leading expositors of Aquinas, but (rightly in my view) eschews the recent theological fashion for constructing a system of analogy on the basis of Aquinas's sparse treatment of the subject. Instead he proposes an approach to theological language which stresses the radical ineffability of the divine, and the dangers of piling one category mistake upon another when engaging in talk about God as if God were an extremely powerful immaterial person, in a manner similar to human beings but very much greater.

Despite his wider disagreements over belief in God, Ruse is entirely in agreement with this negative theological approach, and this jointly expressed caution is perhaps the book's most significant critique of the wider literature on both sides of the question. What Davies calls 'theistic personalism' has become the accepted norm in most of the writings which have emerged in analytical philosophy of religion during recent years and, while the philosophical questions posed may remain intellectually stimulating, it is hard to see how a God who might or might not exist, or who might or might not decide to do X in response to Y, can really have very much to do with the traditional God of Western theism, let alone the particular narrative of the divine which is presented in the Christian traditions, both Eastern and Western.

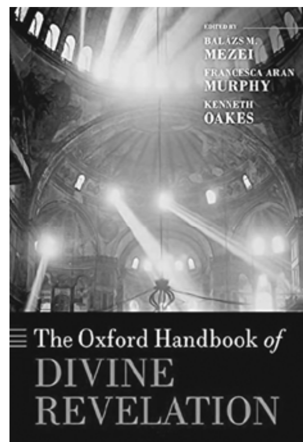
If there is a gap in what this book offers, it is the lack of engagement with the spirituality which accompanies so much of the theological apologetic that has been offered, in differing contexts and styles, by Christian writers

in both academic and popular media over many centuries. But time and space, however infinite in reality, are also great limiters, as any writer on the philosophy of God knows all too well.

This book is to be recommended to anyone seriously interested in contemporary discussion of God in the anglophone philosophical sphere. It is not simple or lightweight, but neither is it weighed down by jargon or demanding of any particularly specialist knowledge. The reader will be able to learn much about both theology and philosophy generally and will probably find that assumptions about concepts such as 'faith' or 'doctrine' are subject to some robust questioning. The educational value of the book rests, however, not simply on the clarity of its comprehensive treatment of the God question, but also on the enjoyably infectious intellectual friendship which comes through the pages. This is philosophy and theology conducted as they ought to be—rigorous, robust and highly learned, but also patient, generous and genuinely enquiring. Would that more books were written in the same manner.

Peter Groves

***The Oxford Handbook of Divine Revelation*, edited by Balázs M. Mezei, Francesca Aran Murphy and Kenneth Oakes (Oxford: OUP, 2021). 978 0 1987 9535 3, pp. 720, £110.00.**



After a rich and balanced introduction (on the 'newness' of revelation) by the gifted Hungarian theologian Balázs Mezei, this handbook is divided into six parts: 'Biblical Approaches', 'Theological Approaches', 'Philosophical Approaches', 'Historical and Comparative Approaches' (all seven chapters), 'Approaches in Science' (six chapters) and 'Approaches in Culture' (also six chapters). It concludes with an afterword by Francesca Aran Murphy.

An author of major studies in fundamental theology, Kenneth Oakes ('Scripture, Tradition, and Creeds') describes 'revelation in the strict sense as the presence of a self-communicative God who makes himself known to human beings'. Scripture becomes 'a witness to and a participant of this presence and self-communication' (23). In fuller terms the order becomes revelation, scripture, tradition and creeds: 'the Christian doctrine of revelation

is first and foremost an explication of the mystery of the Trinity as unfolded in the Scripture, acknowledged by tradition, and illustrated by the creeds' (22).

This might suggest that Oakes differs from the order endorsed by Vatican II's constitution on divine revelation: the divine self-revelation (chapter 1), tradition (chapter 2), and the inspired scriptures (chapters 3–6). Revelation produced and then affected tradition, which in its turn gave birth to the scriptures. Yet Oakes is well aware of the truth indicated by the Council's order: revelation, tradition and inspiration:

> The Scriptures of the New Testament narrate the origin, content, and transmission of the tradition of apostolic preaching, and one of these reasons why these particular writings became Scripture is because of their agreement with the tradition of apostolic preaching (32).

Contemporary scholars have tended to substitute 'culture' for 'tradition'. This is not to allege that the this *Handbook* neglects the language of 'tradition'. Part Four opens with chapters on 'Revelation in Hindu and Buddhist Traditions' and 'Revelation in the Jewish Tradition'. But, as I argued in *Tradition* (OUP, 2018), such modern authors as Wolfhart Pannenberg, sociologists of religion, and even the bishops who approved the sixteen documents at Vatican II are more at ease speaking of 'culture', where one might expect 'tradition'. Significantly, Yves Congar's classic study of Christian tradition—not Christian culture—which came in time to affect the teaching of both of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Second Vatican Council, seems absent from the handbook. Oakes dedicates a substantial section to 'Tradition' (27–30). Yet the term fails to appear in the index. Nor, for that matter, does 'culture', despite its being employed in the heading for part six: 'Approaches in Culture'.

The fine chapter by Oakes is followed by others shaped by extensive research and good judgment such as those of Sameer Yadav ('Biblical Revelation and Biblical Inspiration'), Timothy Bradshaw ('Revelation as Biblical History'), Anthony Giambrone ('Revelation in Christian Scripture') and Paul Avis ('Revelation, Epistemology, and Authority'). These and other chapters would serve as excellent texts for sessions of graduate and higher undergraduate seminars.

With his characteristic skill and concern not to caricature other positions, Avis treats the transition from a propositional view of revelation to a modern presentation of revelation as divine self-revelation. But this primary model 'does not preclude us from postulating a cognitive content in revelation' (175). When he notes that 'divine self-revelation is the only plausible and theologically valid characterization of revelation' (174), Avis allows us to distinguish between a primary characterization (self-revelation) and a secondary, dependent characterization (propositional revelation).

The most powerful and challenging chapter comes from Gregory Yuri Glazov, 'Revelation after the Holocaust'. It should be compulsory reading for any course or seminar on divine revelation, and it raises the question: should the handbook have included a separate chapter on the human condition of suffering (*homo dolens*) and our search for truth, goodness and beauty as opening us to embrace faith and give our love to the self-revealing God? Glazov implicitly raises this question when he recalls 'Victor Frankl's recollections of helping fellow inmates to survive Auschwitz by sustaining their appreciation of *beauty* seen or remembered, and nurturing their will to ultimate *meaning* and self-determination' (436; emphasis added).

These remarks about *homo dolens* bring to mind the data on human experiences of the transcendent God collected by an emeritus Oxford professor, Sir Alister Hardy (1896–1985), who founded in 1969 the Religious Experience and Research Centre. He and his colleagues put together a huge database of over 6,000 personal accounts of spiritual experiences provided by 'ordinary' people. Public worship, the beauty of nature, sacred concerts and prayerfully reading the Bible could prove the environments for events of divine self-revelation. Yet these reports, over and over again, witnessed to the way in which painful and even tragic episodes had occasioned a vivid sense of God's loving presence. A comforting disclosure of divine support and love came through, even and often especially, at times when people felt themselves afflicted and even tortured by evil.

Let us conclude with the sixth and closing part of the handbook. It focuses on approaches to revelation through human culture and takes up such areas as sexuality, music, the visual arts and film. The chapter by Jeremy Begbie, 'Music and Divine Revelation', comes from a world authority on the subject. His essay establishes abundantly his credentials. It is 'to the degree that music exceeds language's reach' that 'it can act as an apt and powerful means of revealing the divine' (616). Music 'can help to free us *from* the idolatrous illusion that we can in some manner get our linguistic fingers around God … and at the same time free us *for* and engagement with language so that it can become a vehicle of communion' (617).

Craig Iffland and Omar Shaukat ('Revelation and Film') sensitively analyse a film (in two parts) by Quentin Tarantino, *Kill Bill*, showing how it empowers viewers to ask questions and find meaning concerning God, themselves and the world. Such a film enjoys remarkable revelatory potential. But another theological concept automatically comes into play, when its heroine accepts being a 'life-giver'. That amounts to accepting a mediating role in salvation. As John's Gospel abundantly illustrates, when human beings recognise the Light of the world, they also accept the Life of the world. The grace of revelation and that of salvation remain distinguishable, but they remain inseparable.

In fairness to Iffland and Shaukat, they are looking for a theological concept which is at least distinguishable from other such concepts (643).

Apropos of the idea that 'the entire created order, qua created, is a potentially suitable meeting point for an encounter with God', Iffland and Shaukat write: 'one wonders whether general revelation is an absolutely necessary tool in his [Craig Detweiler's] analysis' (642). If one agrees with Thomas Aquinas and other classical thinkers, only God is truly 'absolutely necessary'. In the existence and activity (academic or other) of creatures, nothing can be absolutely necessary. It is enough to talk about what one needs.

The chapter on 'Revelation in the Visual Arts' by Ralf van Bühren is a tour de force. It starts from early Christianity, in which artworks and sacred spaces already worked to make present the transcendent. They belong eminently to the 'communication media of divine revelation' as non-verbal means that render God's presence visible inside and outside liturgical celebration. They should also 'be seen as paradigms of salvation' (623).

Having taught in Rome for over thirty years, I appreciated van Bühren's attention to the new and the old. In the church of Sant'Agostino two pilgrims painted by Caravaggio kneel and, 'with the eyes of faith', see the Virgin Mary and Child 'almost physically real at the doorway of their house in Nazareth'. In Caravaggio's painting the inner vision of the old couple 'serves as a threshold for the imagination of the viewers of the altarpiece'. Before ending, van Bühren slips in a reference to the Redemptoris Mater Chapel in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. In the late 1990s, the vault and the four walls of the chapel were covered with mosaics by Marko Rupnik and a colleague. The 'theological programme represents major events of the history of salvation' (635). In the context of this handbook, we might add, 'and, therefore, of the history of revelation'.

Van Bühren writes of the visual arts revealing 'transcendent realities' (624) and 'the mystery of God' (625). But it is only twice, and then in quotations from others, that he speaks of 'appearances of beauty' (626) and visible forms representing 'invisible beauty' (629). Glazov, as we saw above, recalls how Frankl helped fellow prisoners survive Auschwitz by sustaining their appreciation of beauty. Avis in 'Revelation, Epistemology and Authority' (180) follows Hans Urs von Balthasar by endorsing the theme of the beauty of God. It provides the 'aesthetic path to divine truth' disclosed in revelation. Von Balthasar, who stood out among Western theologians for championing the divine beauty, turns up regularly in this handbook. Nevertheless, the 'beauty' of God, which through revelation invites and triggers human faith and love, does not figure in the index.

Nor, for that matter, do we find 'truth', divine or otherwise, in the index. On any showing, revelation communicates Truth (the Truth that is God) and truths (realities that, prior to revelation, had remained hidden), and several contributors to the handbook remind us of this. See Richard Swinburne on the plausibility of God's revealing truths and Jung Mo Sung ('The Outcry and Revelation of the Truth that Sets Us Free'). The latter writes of the revelation of truth 'imprisoned by injustice' (457), and declares that 'revelation happens when we love one another and struggle for life and for the dignity of all people' (470). Peter Joseph Fritz ('Revelation in Heidegger') dedicates a section to 'Truth and the Abyss of Freedom'. When he ends his chapter with the words 'the revelatory ecstasy of love' (319), Fritz can also alert us to the fact that 'love' does not find a place in the index, and that absence occurs in a book which ends by recognising the power of von Balthasar's masterpiece, *Love Alone* (672–673).

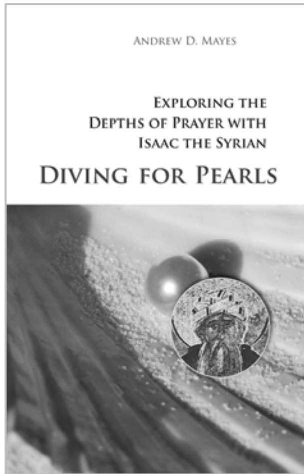
The index supplies, however, appropriate answers to some queries about the selection of chapters. We might, for example, have expected a chapter on faith, the human response to the divine self-revelation, and a chapter on Vatican II's constitution on divine revelation (*Dei verbum* of 1965). (The index shows the authors constantly discussing human 'faith', and regularly treating *Dei verbum* under 'Vatican Council, Second'.) Why have such significant authors as Sarah Coakley, Jean-Luc Marion, Bernard McGinn and Rowan Williams not contributed chapters? All these writers, with the exception of Coakley, can be found through the index. The volume is far from ignoring all these scholars. They may have been invited to prepare chapters but, for good reasons, had to decline the invitation.

Inevitably, some reviewers will remark on the relative absence of women scholars among the 42 contributors. There are only three: Francesca Aran Murphy ('Traditionalism and Revelation'), Michele Schumacher ('Revelation and Human Sexuality') and Heidi Campbell (co-author of 'Divine Revelation and Digital Religion'). Weigh this absence over against Francesca Aran Murphy being one of the three editors of the handbook, and the representation of women in the lists of works cited and recommended for further reading.

The handbook is a beautifully produced work—as befits the central subject of divine revelation. I noticed only two typos: my own surname (351) and *nostrum* for *nostram* (668). All in all, it provides a set of exciting, well-informed and judicious essays that, from different angles, treat expertly an utterly foundational theme of Christian prayer, life and worship: the divine self-revelation.

Gerald O'Collins SJ

Andrew Mayes, *Diving for Pearls: Exploring the Depths of Prayer with Isaac the Syrian* (Collegeville: Cistercian, 2021). 978 0 8790 7163 9, pp. 184, £15.99.



The book is written as a practical manual and guided tour of Isaac the Syrian's writings, by a guide with wide knowledge and experience of undertaking this journey himself and accompanying others. Andrew Mayes explains something of Isaac's context—other writers contemporary with him and those who influenced him—and offers some spiritual and theological reflection on reading Isaac as a guide to growth in prayer. Mayes quotes generously from Isaac's writings, acknowledging the scholarly English translations, in eight relatively short chapters with questions for reflection and a prayer exercise at the end of each.

Chapter 1 begins with a quotation to which I have found myself returning, or—to use the image of the ocean that Isaac employs extensively—sinking into more deeply.

> My beloved ones, because I was foolish, I could not bear to guard the secret in silence, but have become mad, for the sake of your profit …. Oft when I was writing these things, my fingers paused on the paper. They could not bear the delight which had fallen into the heart. (15)

In the overall context of the book this passage speaks to me of Isaac's deep personal experience of God, the Creator and owner of all things who has immeasurable compassion for all creatures.

Isaac wrote from personal experience and, in the introduction, Mayes explains that this book comes from his own personal experience of engaging with the texts and sharing them with others in prayer and reflection. 'Isaac invites us to become explorers of the Divine …. He summons us to a transformative life-changing journey'; or, as Isaac wrote in the final extract of the last chapter:

> May the Lord grant you this, that it will not only be from simple reading that you know these things, but that in the experience of your person you may know, feel and taste these things, by means of the grace of the holy Spirit which rests upon your intellect. Amen. (133)

As 'a fellow pilgrim, companion on the journey', Isaac shares what he has received while acknowledging that there are, 'many paths, each person taking

the path for which his understanding is capable and on which he can make progress, drawing closer to God on it as a result of daily experience' (130)

This led me to wonder about the foolishness and madness of which Isaac writes. It is his delight to share what he has experienced and what changed his life, but perhaps there is also folly in trying to tell others what they can only learn experientially for themselves, led by God—and in spending more time on learning about Isaac's experience than on getting to know God myself.

Chapter 3 describes Isaac's six vital skills for 'Learning to Swim' spiritually. They are determination, training, spiritual discipline, flexibility, 'holding the breath of our thoughts' (44), and nakedness and vulnerability. The most striking for me was this last: nakedness and vulnerability. Mayes describes nakedness as radical dispossession and detachment from things that engage us in our own affairs. He mentions Isaac's use of three biblical references to nakedness. Jesus is naked on the cross in total self-giving. Similarly, Isaac sees Peter fishing naked in the boat on the Lake of Tiberias as an image of complete dedication to searching for God. The third biblical image of nakedness is that of Adam and Eve, who are initially totally exposed and open to God but then cover themselves up and separate themselves from God.

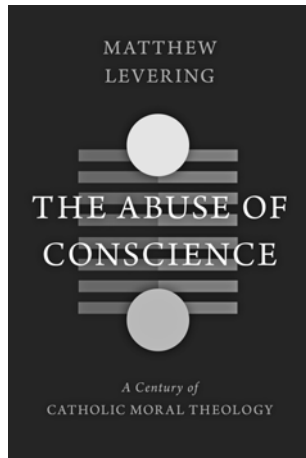
Chapters 4–6 talk of the challenges of embarking on the often-difficult path of repentance and focus on God. Chapters 7 and 8 describe the fruit of this searching that Isaac was given and expects others will also receive, that is, learning that God is the Creator of all creatures, to whom all creatures belong and God's unimaginable compassion.

> … consider then, how rich in its wealth is the ocean of His creative act, and how many created things belong to God, and how in His compassion He carries everything, acting providentially as He guides creation; and how with a love that cannot be measured He arrived at the establishment of the world and the beginning of creation; and how compassionate God is, and how patient; and how He loves creation, and how He carries it, gently enduring its importunity, the various sins and wickedness, the terrible blasphemies of demons and evil men. (121)

God's 'is the heart's burning for the sake of the entire creation' (118) and gives assurance that we were justified in detaching from everything and focusing on God. I found this to be an interesting and inspiring book to read; however the challenge remains to plunge back into the ocean and continue letting God teach me to swim.

Geoffrey te Braake SJ

Matthew Levering, *The Abuse of Conscience: A Century of Catholic Moral Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021). 978 0 8028 7950 9, pp. 368, $45.00.



Expanding this book's subtitle captures its focus: twentieth-century Roman Catholic thought on the role of conscience in moral theology. Levering provides an outstanding historical overview of the relevant work of various theologians and philosophers. The broad coverage includes: some prominent biblical theologians (such as Rudolf Bultmann, Yves Congar, Richard Hays); selected authors of Roman Catholic moral manuals (such as Austin Fagothey, Michael Cronin, Dominic Prümmer), various moral Thomists (Benoît-Henri Merkelbach, Eric D'Arcy, Servais Pinckaers), and some prominent German writers (Karl Jaspers, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Rahner, Bernard Häring, Joseph Ratzinger). The coverage is largely expository, without detailed assessment. The book concludes with 'The Path Forward,' giving the last word to some recent work of Reinhard Hütter, with whom Levering largely agrees on the role of conscience.

Overall, Levering argues for 'repair work' on the use of conscience in Catholic moral theology. The main task consists in:

> … reintegrating conscience into the broader framework of the Christian moral organism—in which conscience serves prudence and thereby serves the other virtues as well—with God and beatitude at the center, and thus with Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit at the center, healing and elevating the powers of human nature in accord with God's law (207).

In the context of this moral framework, conscience will not easily take on a role of excessive importance. In particular, it will not underwrite moral relativism or a kind of existentialism implying that human decision-making has ultimate moral authority. Levering identifies an excessive importance assigned to conscience by a number of writers, but he offers a challenge guided by theological commitments from the New Testament. His challenge is quite plausible from the perspective of New Testament theology.

Levering avoids a common extreme of leaving out any important role for conscience in moral theology. That extreme is found among a number of Protestant writers on moral theology, such as Richard Hays (with whom he agrees about the needed biblical framework for conscience). Levering adds:

> The path forward today consists in integrating the best biblical and Thomistic insights with an existentialist emphasis on a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. Conscience will continue to have a significant role, but now within the virtue of prudence. (16)

He mentions Karl Rahner's understanding of prudence as 'largely what Aquinas would have deemed to be conscience': 'prudence first envisages the full range of general principles, then the concrete circumstances, and inquires what principle or combination of principles is to be actually applied in precisely these circumstances' (158). Conscience, then, concerns the application of a principle to a particular case. Levering thus avoids giving conscience an authoritative role in creating general moral principles, and he thereby steers clear of moral relativism.

The approach offered by Levering is suitably balanced and even compelling for a Christian moral theology, avoiding the extremes he plausibly challenges. Two matters, however, surprised me. Levering made no mention of a classic twentieth-century work on the role of conscience in Christian theology: Peter T. Forsyth, *The Principle of Authority* (1912). In addition, he did not pursue Bernard Häring's plausible suggestion that biblical talk of 'the heart' often includes the idea of conscience. That suggestion opens up the biblical materials to a broader treatment of conscience, where positive leading can supplement negative conviction from conscience. Even so, Levering's book is required reading on the topic of the role of conscience in Catholic moral theology. It also is a model of ecumenical discussion.

Paul Moser

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